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INTRODUCTION.

At a sale of the effects of an eminent antiquary lately deceased, it was our happiness and good fortune to become the possessor of a certain little MS. volume, closely written, in a neat small hand of the seventeenth century. It is very thick, contains nearly a thousand pages, is bound in black leather, and is fastened by two brass clasps. On the title-page was written, "The Storie of my Lyffe, concludit to this year 1660."

On examining our literary and antiquarian treasure, which we did with ardour, we found that it was the adventures of a Scottish gentleman, of that stirring period indicated by the date, who had served for a time, as a soldier of fortune, in the armies of Denmark. We found the book interesting, from the glimpses of wild adventure, hair-breadth escapes, high military courage, and raciness it exhibited; thus, the more we read, the more pleased did we become.

Philip Rollo, for such was the name of the writer, seemed to be beside us relating his own startling adventures; and we were upon the point of handing over the MS. to our enterprising friends of the Bannatyne Club, when, lo! we discovered that there were two serious gaps in it. Though having little doubt that the archæologists would gladly publish these curious memoirs even in their mutilated state, we preferred to restore the thread of the narrative, so far as we could do so, from the quaint pages of the *Amsterdam Courant*, the *Swedish Intelligencer*, the warlike story of Colonel Monro and others, and, after modernising the spelling and language of the whole, so as to make it more

generally readable, handed over our transcript to our friend Mr. Routledge, of London.

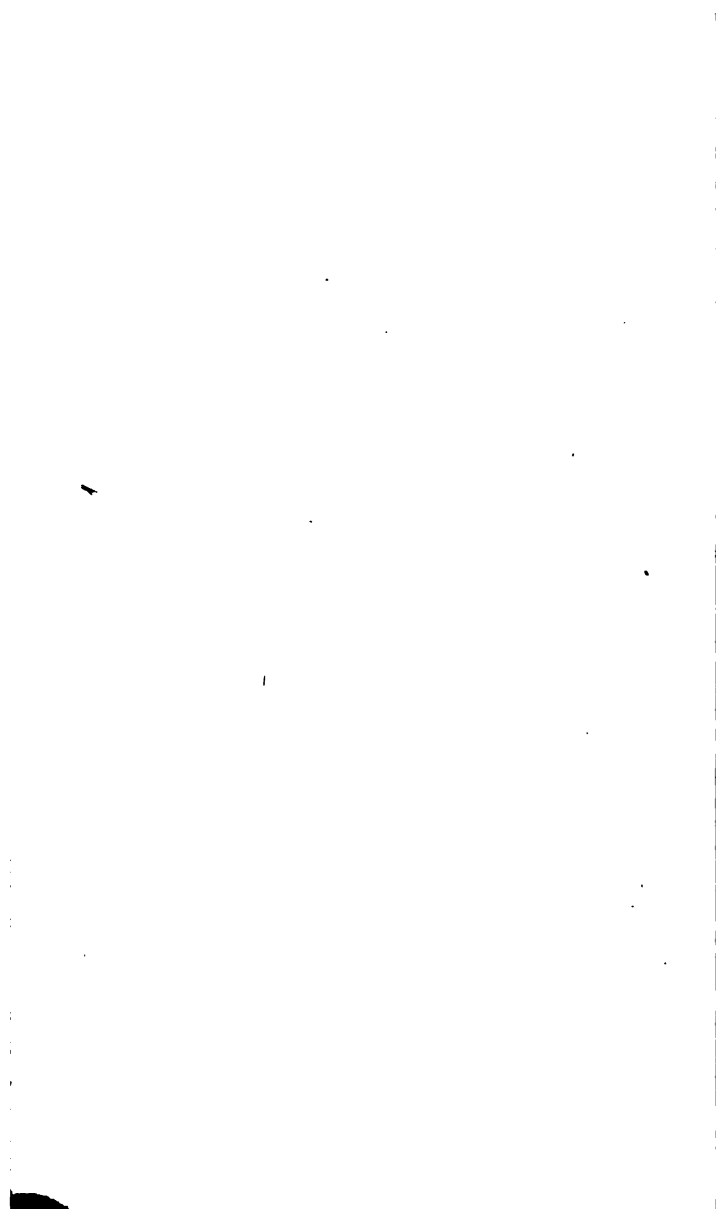
Those portions of the work which have been made up from contemporary authority, we are much too cunning to point out; though we have little doubt that the critical reader will easily recognise them. But we may add that, historically considered, we have found the military details to tally so closely with those given in the Low Dutch "Relation," "Ye Danish Warres," and other works, that our soldier of fortune may defy the closest scrutiny.

When we read the memoirs of any eminent man of whom no portrait is extant, we are naturally curious to know what like he was—the colour of his eyes, of his hair, and so forth; and, most fortunately, before entering upon the adventures of Philip Rollo we are enabled to afford the reader a pretty good idea of these matters; for at the same extensive sale, where it was our fortune to find the MS., a portrait of the cavalier was "knocked down" to us for a comparative trifle—nothing, absolutely, when we consider that it was a real and well-authenticated *Jamesone*, an artist, so justly esteemed the Vandyke of Scotland, and who studied with Sir Anthony under Rubens at Antwerp.

This portrait, which appears, by a date inscribed thereon, to have been painted about the year 1630, exhibits an eminently handsome cavalier in the gallant and picturesque costume of that time. The face is oval—the forehead white and high—the mustaches and imperial well pointed—the eyes are dark—the hair long and of the deepest brown. The left hand rests in the bowl hilt of a long Spanish rapier, which hangs in a magnificent baldric, worn sashwise over the right shoulder; the right hand rests on a helmet, to show that it is the portrait of a gentleman and soldier. We have also an admirable example of the Scottish costume of the period; this cavalier's doublet having loose sleeves, slashed with white, the collar being covered by a falling band of the richest point lace; a short crimson cloak hangs

jauntily on the left shoulder; the breeches are of blue velvet, fringed with point lace, and meet the long riding boots, which have tops of ruffled lace. A military order sparkles on his breast, and a dagger dangles at his right side. Under the helmet there peeps out a slip of paper, on which is written, *Philip Rollo, lys portraitoure.*

There is a proud and lofty expression in the face of this old portrait (which is now hanging above my writing table) that is remarkably pleasing and impressive. While gazing at it, the dark eyes seem to fill with dusky fire—the proud lips to curl, and the manly breast to expand with the high military spirit the original once possessed; while the clouds of battle, which envelop the background, seem once more to roll around him on the wind. This is power of the Jamesone's pencil—that magic power which the lapse of more than two hundred years has failed to obliterate; and we hope that the reader will, ere long, be as interested as we are ourselves in the fortunes and misfortunes, loves and adventures, of Philip Rollo, whose personal memoirs appear to have been compiled by himself for his own amusement, rather than for that of others.



PHILIP ROLLO.

Book the First.

CHAPTER I.

OF MY FAMILY, AND THE MISFORTUNE OF NOT HAVING A LARGE MOUTH.

I WAS born in the year after King James VI. acquired the dominion of England, at my father's tower of Craigrollo, which overlooks the great bay of Cromartie. The youngest of four sons, I was (God knows why) a child of ill-omen from my birth; for, before that event came to pass, my mother had various remarkable dreams, which were darkly and mysteriously construed by certain Highland crones of the district; and the whole family made up their minds to expect that I should never be the source of aught else but discomfort and disgrace to them.

All unconscious of the disagreeable impressions regarding me, I was ushered (poor little devil!) into this world on a Friday, the most ominous day of the week for such an arrival; when a furious storm of wind was rolling the waves of the North Sea against the Sutors of Cromartie; and a tempest of rain was lashing the walls and windows of the old tower, and drenching the older pine-woods that surrounded it. A knife and spade had been placed below my mother's bed, a Bible below her pillow, and the room was plentifully sprinkled with salt, to avert the mal-influence of the fairies, and every way the old fashions of the Highlands were complied with strictly.

My father had been particularly anxious for a daughter, that he might marry her to his nephew, M'Farquhar of that ilk, to whom he was tutor or guardian; and various wise women, who had been solemnly convened in council before I was born, had all been morally certain that my mother would have a daughter.

"You have long loved French apples," said old Mhona Toshach; "your ladyship is *sure* to have a daughter."

My sudden appearance upset all their calculations, and not more than those of my father.

"The devil's in the brat!" said he. "There goes the estate M'Farquhar, with its five hundred broadswords;" for, in our Scottish fashion, he was what we call *the tutor* of the property.

As if to increase the general prejudice against me, I squall right lustily, which made all the old crones of the household and the wise women of the parish, with Mhona Toshach, my mother's nurse, at their head, tremble and predict that, through life, "sore trials and evil would attend the course of the *Friday bairn*." All the crickets in the bakehouse disappeared that day for ever, a surer foreboding of dire calamity.

Though we were a branch of a Lowland or Perthshire family the gallant Rollos of Duncruib, my father, partly to humour my mother, who was a daughter of the race of M'Farquhar, and partly to please his Highland neighbours, resolved to celebrate my arrival in the old country fashion. The old family banner with its azure chevrons, on which the spiders had been spinning their webs since it had been last unfurled on the birth of my brother Ewen (for my father was eminently a peaceful man), was displayed on the old tower; and more than one gallant puncheon of ale and bombarde of Flemish wine were set abroad in the yard. I was baptized over a broadsword. Then came the solemn and important ceremony of placing in my mouth "the Rollo spoon," which was done in presence of the whole household; and which, from the consternation it occasioned, requires some explanation.

An ancestor of ours, Sir Ringan Rollo of that ilk, who had accompanied Earl Douglas (afterwards Marshal of France and Duke of Touraine) on his successful invasion of England, in the year of God 1420, when sacking the manor-house of a certain English squire, found therein a silver spoon of great size and curious workmanship, which he brought home with him to Cromartie, leaving in place thereof his right eye, which he lost by an English arrow in the assault. This spoon, doubtless the palladium of a long race of well-fed Saxons, became the heirloom of the house of Rollo, on which it produced a very remarkable effect—not unlike that which Rigord tells us the loss of the true cross at Tiberiade had upon all children born afterwards in Christendom—for instead of thirty teeth they had but *twenty*. So all the future Rollos of the Craig came in time to be distinguished by the unusual size of their mouths from the first year after this spoon was deposited in the oak charter-chest of the family. I had a great-uncle whose mouth, when born, extended from ear to ear; but still it was almost insufficient to contain this capacious English spoon, which was quite round, measured three

inches in diameter, and on which our valiant ancestor had engraved his crest, a stag's head, with the legend,—

"This spune I leave in legacie
To the maist mouthed Rollo, after me.
RINGAN ROLLO, 1491."

Thus, whenever a son or daughter of the family was born, the insertion of this remarkable heirloom into their mouths was one of the usual ceremonies, and was considered as indispensable as marriage or christening. Such a trophy was considered something to be vain of, by the Rollos of the Craig, who were sorely jealous of their neighbours, the Urquharts of Cromartie, who deduced their descent from Alcibiades the Athenian! *

It had been remarked that every Rollo of the Craig, whose mouth would not admit this spoon, or at least a portion of it, was remarkably unfortunate; thus, of my father's ten brothers, three, who were so unhappy as to have mouths like other people, after being distinguished for their facility in getting into quarrels and turmoils, were all cut off, early in life; one being slain by the English, at the Raid of the Redswire; a second with Buccleuch in the Lowlands of Holland; and the third, who had become an officer in a Scottish frigate, being taken by the cruel pirates of Barbary, who basely murdered him. Most happily for themselves, my three elder brothers were blessed with enormously wide mouths—in fact, they were like nothing that I can remember but the mouth of a cannon, or the stone gutters of a cathedral; but I—poor little wretch!—had a mouth so remarkably small, that no part of this capacious spoon would enter therein—not even a segment of it; and from that moment I was unanimously considered as a lost, an untrue Rollo. My father turned his back upon me from that day, and vowed there was less of the Rollo than the M'Farquhar about me; so, from thenceforward, I was, as it were, delivered into the hands of mischance and misfortune.

A goodly volume would be required to narrate all the heart-burnings and sore taunts I endured in boyhood, for the smallness of my mouth; the studied coldness of my father; the gibes and laughter of my brothers; the ominous forebodings and doleful anticipations of the old nurse, Mhona Toshach; and the equivocal taunts of the *good-natured* friends and tenantry, among whom I seemed to be viewed like the poor dog, that should be hung after acquiring the bad name, the mob and their misdeeds, have given him. That diabolical old spoon was the bane of my existence; and, influenced by certain hints from my poor mother, who, having a very small and very pretty mouth herself, sympathised with me, I made more than one essay to obtain possession of it,

* See Sir Thomas Urquhart's Works.

for the purpose of throwing it into the deepest part of Cromartie bay, with a pretty heavy stone attached thereto. But the ancient charter-chest, with its iron bands and triple locks, defied all my efforts; and many a hearty kick I gave it, in pure rage and despite, after every attempt of myself and Mhona had failed to widen my mouth to the family size, by the simple mode of inserting our fingers therein, and pulling the corners in contrary directions.

Had my father (worthy man!) been of a jealous disposition, I doubt not that it might have occasioned some dispeace between him and my mother, who told him often, that "he ought to love my mouth the more for being so like her own;" but, wedded to his own opinions, based as they were on the traditions and predictions of two hundred years, the old gentleman, who had himself a singularly open countenance, was inexorable, and sorely dreaded that little Philip was foredoomed to bring disgrace, or at least mischance, on the Rollos of the Craig.

Save this peculiar prejudice, he was one of the best men in the county; and was one of those old gentlemen who are always looking back and never forward: he stuck manfully to the bombasted doublets and fashions of his father's days, and never allowed a Michaelmas to pass without eating a St. Michael's bannock, or a Christmas without seeing the yule log laid on the hearth, and never was known to kill a spider, in memory of the good service once rendered to Scotland and the Bruce in the days of old.

Though I suffered severely from his strange pique, it was perhaps the source of good to me ultimately. Instead of being retained at home, like my brothers, spelling over the *Auld Prymar*, and trembling under the ferrule of Dominie Daidle, the tutor, fiddler, and factor of the family, and spending three parts of the day in hunting, shooting with the bow, banqueting, dancing, and learning to handle the claymore and target, I was despatched to the King's College at Aberdeen, where I was duly matriculated in 1621, about the time when the battle was fought in Leith Roads between the Spaniards and the Admiral of Zealand; for I remember well that it formed the constant topic of conversation among my brother students, many of whom were from the south country.

Here my usual mischance accompanied me, for I was always involved in quarrels with the ruffling gallants of the Brave City, or lost my money among cheats and sharpers at post and pair, or the old game of trumps. Lord knows! I never had much to lose, and I nearly reached the end of my wits and my purse together. Then, to crown all, I fell deadly sick of that terrible silence which has so frequently desolated Aberdeen, having

swept away its citizens no less than ten times between the years 1401 and 1647. So great was the panic latterly, that the classes of the universities were removed to Peterhead; but I, unable to accompany them, was borne to the huts erected for the sick on the Links, where we were strictly guarded by soldiers, to prevent the infection spreading.

While there, I received a letter from my father, condoling with me on my doleful case, and hinting broadly, that, had my mouth been larger, I could have eaten more, and should assuredly have escaped, like my brothers, who were strong and well. As I had been robbed of my last plack by the cruel nurses, a few silver crowns had been more welcome, and I crushed up the poor man's letter, for the least mention of my "small mouth" was sufficient to make me tremble with rage. My dear mother sent me two jars, one filled with usquebaugh, and the other with honey; but as the soldiers drank the first, and the nurses eat the second, I got no use of either. There, among the pest-stricken, I lingered long, hovering, as it were, between life and death, sighing to be beside my mother, to feel her gentle hand on my hot and throbbing brow, and to hear her kind voice whispering in my ear; for, boy like, I thought if I were only once again beside that kind parent, and she touched me, I should become whole and well.

I thought of the old tower too, though, save one, none loved me there; I saw the dark pines that shaded its old grey walls; the whin rocks, the heath-clad hills, and the blue bay of Cromartie, with the great Sutors, like two Cyclopean towers, that overhang its narrow entrance; and sorely I longed to see them all once again, before I died.

Wearied, weak, and feeble, I hoped to die soon; but by the blessing of God, and the strength of my own constitution, I recovered; nor must I omit to make honourable mention of that worthy surgeon, Donald Gordon, author of the learned "*Pharmaco-pinax*, or Table and Taxe of the Vsual Medicaments containyd in his Apothecarie and Chymicall shope, in New Aberdene;" and but for whose skill and kindness, I had never lived to write these my memoirs.

I recovered, the plague passed away, the *Senatus Academicus* once more returned to the King's College, and the classes were resumed. I commenced my studies again with renewed ardour, and again became immersed in the classic pages of Plutarch, of Sallust, and of Nepos. I longed to become a great scholar, a renowned statesman, or a gallant soldier—anything famous and lofty, that I might cast from myself the slur that hateful heirloom of the Rollos had fixed upon me; that I might leave for ever the atmosphere of ill omens with which it had surrounded me, and

the dark predictions that were ever grating in my ears and ranking in my memory. I perfected myself in mathematics and the humanities, and spent my whole spare time in acquiring the use of arms; thus, before I completed a year at King's College, I could handle the bow and the arquebuse, toss the pike and throw the bar, vault and ride, use pistolette, rapier, and backsword to perfection, so that the oldest and stoutest—yea, and the boldest—of our students were somewhat wary of offending me; for on the shortest notice, off went my gown, and out came bilbo and poniard.

I know not whether it was the nature of my studies, the force of circumstances, or my natural inclination towards high enterprise, that have guided me; but *this* I may boldly aver, that never, to my knowledge, have I swerved from the proper path which a gentleman of honour and cavalier of spirit ought to pursue in his intercourse with society.

CHAPTER II.

HOW I BECAME A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

HAVING completed my studies at the King's College, I left it in the June of 1628, and returned to my father's house, from which I had been so long absent, and, as I felt with bitterness, unregrettedly so, by all save my poor mother, whom to my sorrow I found on the verge of death. She had long been suffering from a pain in her side, and was *dwining* away (as we Scots say), but I was not prepared to see her only live to bless me, and then close her eyes for ever.

I felt that the only friend I possessed on earth had left both it and me! I was very, very desolate.

Many a ghastly visage, and many a stiffened form, have I seen since that day of grief, which passed so many years ago; but that pale face, and those kind sinking eyes, come vividly before me at times, out of the mist of the years that have gone. My father, as he closed her eyes, averred sorrowfully, "that, had her mouth been larger, she would have respired more freely, and might have lived for ten good years longer;" but she died—and on a bed of pigeons' feathers *too*, to the dismay of all the wise women in Cromartie; for it is an old superstition, that one cannot die on the feathers of those birds.

Though a numerous host of relations were around that gloomy bed, and crowding the chambers of the old tower, I felt lonely (for such was the miserable prejudice against me), and that I was viewed as somewhat of an alien among them—even by those o

my own blood and kindred ; and the consciousness of that filled my heart with mingled rage and grief.

My father was cold as ever, the more so, perhaps, as his heart was full of sorrow, and sorrow is ever selfish ; but my brothers, Farquhar, Finlay, and Ewen, were colder still with unkind envy, for they had heard such glowing reports of my progress in all those studies which most become a gentleman. Being certain that I had outstripped their slender knowledge, which was confined to the narrow limits of Dominie Daidle's classes, they were so full of jealousy, that our mother had scarcely been lowered down into her dark and lonely home, before these youths, who were now grown into tall and swinging Highlandmen, challenged me to various trials of strength and skill. Though I could easily encounter them with broadsword and target, or with single-stick, Farquhar could beat me at throwing the hammer, and Finlay at tossing the bullet, as Ewen could at bringing down an eagle on the wing with a single shot, or splitting a tree by one blow of a Lochaber axe ; for they were all strong as young horses, untamed as mountain goats, and from their cradles had been wont to sup usquebaugh with their porridge.

My mother's funeral was celebrated after the good old fashion of the Highlands, and we buried her by torchlight in the ancient kirk of St. Regulus. Under their chief, Ian Dhu, three hundred of her kinsmen, the M'Farquhars, came down from the hills, with six pipers playing before them, and I shall never forget the sad, low wailing of the lament performed by those mountain minstrels, as the long funeral procession wound by night, along the margin of Cromartie Firth. The pall was emblazoned with sixteen proofs of her gentle blood, and the nearest kinsman carried her poor remains on a bier, around which all the old women of her own clan, and my father's barony, moved in a melancholy crowd, beating their breasts, tearing their dishevelled hair, and lamenting wildly.

There was no prayer at the grave, because we were old Protestants ; but the Seanachie of her father's race pronounced a long oration on her virtues ; the M'Farquhars fired their pistols in the air, with an explosion which nearly blew out all the church windows ; then followed a frightful shovelling of earth, the careful adjusting of a large stone slab—and all was over.

I was the last who left the darkened church.

I followed the procession, which, with the pipers strutting in front, returned to the tower of Craigrolo, where the funeral feast was spread and the dredgie to be drunk, the great silver spoon of Sir Rangan being laid, on this solemn occasion, beside my father's platter, which stood above the salt.

The dredgie I willingly pass over, and would as willingly commit to oblivion ; for I may safely assert that, of four hundred

men who were in the tower, not one was sober when the morrow dawned; and not less than two hundred gallons of mountain whisky were consumed as a libation in my mother's honour. Happily there was no fighting, but only a blow with a dirk and a slash with an axe exchanged between a M'Farquhar and a Rollo of Thanesland, about precedence at table.

After six years of a quiet life at King's College, being somewhat unused to our Highland manners, I was scared by this terrible debauch; for, amid it all, I saw by the hall fire, a chair which stood *vacant*, and there seemed to be ever before me that black coffin, with its gilded handles and armorial blazon—the wreath of rosemary and the hour-glass on its lid—the deep dark grave yawning horribly, in the red light of the torches, that had glared on the groined vaults of the ancient kirk. On the morning after the dredgie, leaving the hall encumbered by more than four hundred armed Celts, who, in their plaids, were sleeping and snorting on the floor, I walked forth from the tower to ruminate, and view again the old familiar scenery from which I had so long been absent.

Rising in his full refulgence from the sea, the morning sun was soaring high above the noble Firth of Cromartie, and no prospect that I have since beheld (and in my wandering life I have looked on many) can compare, in my estimation, with the wild mountain shores of my own native bay.

Its entrance is by two steep and lofty hills named the Sutors, which are covered with wood, and overhang the water about a mile apart; between these natural towers, as between the piers of a floodgate, the morning sun poured all his splendour on the Firth, which at my feet spread out for seventeen miles in length, until it vanished in the deep bosom of the Ross-shire mountains, and those of the Black Isle. It is the grandest bay in Britain, and after experience has shown me, that, if its promontories were fortified by cannon, there is no place wherein our Scottish ships could ride with greater security.

In pure white haze the morning mists were rising from the pine-covered glens, and the fishermen were putting forth their nets upon the Firth, which was dotted by the brown sails of their little craft. The sky was cloudless, and the waters of *Crom Ba* (the winding bay) slept like a sheet of polished gold and crystal blue, at the base of its steep green bordering mountains.

I sought M'Farquhar's Bed, a large and rocky cavern which lies below the southern Sutor of Cromartie. It had been a favourite haunt of mine in boyhood; for there an ancestor, Doughal Glass, had once found shelter and concealment, after having slain an Urquhart of Cromartie by a blow of his dirk in a sudden quarrel.

The rock in which this cavern yawns, and above which the hill

rises, possesses an enormous arch, forming a grand natural bridge, below which the waves are ever chafing and booming ; and within it lies another, hollowed by the billows of the eternal sea. From the roof and sides of this cavern, there is a continual dropping of water, which petrifies whatever it falls upon, into a hard substance, whiter than snow ; thus myriads of white pendants cover the walls and deep recesses of this cavern, the whole sides and roof of which glitter as if built of ice, of crystal, and alabaster, presenting the most wonderful and beautiful appearance when a casual ray of the sun glides along the waves which roll within it, lighting up the countless prisms of its rocks and stalactites.

To sit there, as in a fairy palace, and dream, with the summer sea murmuring at my feet, and the Sutors shaking their dark green woods above me, had been my favourite employment in other days ; and now, with a heart saddened by recent events, and somewhat anxious for the future, on this fair morning in June, I sought my old familiar haunt.

When approaching, I was surprised on being suddenly confronted by the figure of an armed Highlander, in the M'Farquhartan, with his plaid belted and claymore at his side. My first thought was of *Grey Doughal*, whose spirit is said to haunt the place which yet bears his name ; but when he turned, I recognised the dark locks and handsome face of my mother's nephew, young Ian Dhu, who, having been earlier abroad than even I, impelled by his own solitary thoughts, had sought this place of so many old memories and dark traditions, the shelter of our common ancestor.

"Your servant, my cousin," said he, drawing off his gauntlet to shake me warmly by the hand.

The keen expression of Ian's clear bright eye showed that he was a Duinewassal of spirit and bravery, while the ardour of his manner and the full tone of his rich voice betokened a good and sensible heart. After some conversation upon the beauty of the morning, the wonderful grotto in which we had met, and then a few observations on the sad ceremony of yesterday, Ian became impressed by the melancholy of my manner.

"You say that in my kinswoman, the good lady, your mother, you have lost your only friend," said he ; "Djou! I marvel much, cousin Philip, that you continue to tarry here, where all men show you the boss of their bucklers, and the crust of the loaf, your father's race and kindred though they be."

"True, Ian," I replied ; "but what would you have me to do?"

"Push your way in the world, to be sure."

"But I have no friends," said I.

"Friends! what other friend than his sword does a brave fellow require? With a good buff belt to keep it at your thigh, it will

go all over the world with you, and is the best knife I know of, with which to carve out a fair fortune; for it will never fail you, if you are but true to it. Now, Philip, when all the brave spirits of Scotland are flocking to the German wars, in tens of thousands, why should you stay behind? All the troops of the great Gustavus Adolphus are led by brave Duinewassals and Lowland cavaliers—yea, every company, regiment, and brigade of his Swedes and allies. All his cities and fortresses are governed by Scotsmen, and there are not less than fourteen thousand valiant Scots covering themselves with glory and honour in the war against the tyrants of the Empire. Ten thousand other Scots are going to Denmark to fight the battles of King Christian against Ferdinand of Hapsburg; and my cousin, Sir Donald of Strathnaver, is now raising three thousand soldiers for that service. Under his banner I am to lead a hundred of my father's men to the Lochlin of the bards of old."

"For what?"

"Dias Muire let! Can you ask? to seek honour for ourselves, and to add one ray to the martial glory which for ages has encircled the tribes of the Gaël."

Fired by the romantic energy of my stately Highland kinsman—

"Ian," I replied, "I am sorely tempted; for you open up the path I have so long wished to pursue. Here I have nothing left to care for, and, if you allow me, I will gladly trail a pike under your orders, and march to the wars of Low Germanie."

"There spoke the M'Farquhar blood, and I was thinking you no better than a Lowlander!" said Ian, his eyes flashing as he clapped me on the shoulder; "but it shall never be said that a kinsman so near and so dear to Ian Dhu, trailed a pike as a private man under our banner, when so many Gunns, Grants, and Munroes, cock their bonnets as commissioned officers. I shall write to my kinsman, Sir Donald, and in a fortnight from this time you shall hear from me. Come, take new courage! together we will push our fortune in these foreign wars, and in the hour of battle and danger, my hundred steel hearts of your mother's tribe will be ever as a shirt of mail around you, Philip!"

I gave my hand upon it to this high-spirited youth, whose energy—as he spoke in his native Gaëlic—I cannot infuse into this dialogue, which is written from memory.

"I will leave this place, Ian, with sensations of bitterness rather than regret," said I, as we ascended to my father's tower; "the only being who would have wept for my departure we laid yesterday in yonder chapel, on which the morning sun now shines so redly. None seem to love me here——"

"The more reason to march—eh?"

"From my birth my father has hated me, because——" (I could not mention the ridiculous reason, for it always filled me with anger.)

"Because—why?"

"I was not a girl, whom you might have married."

Ian burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, and kissed the silver brooch by which his plaid was fastened.

"By my soul! I think my good uncle was mistaken; for the more sons a baron hath to defend his hearth-stone and hall-door, the better in these unruly times."

"I was born on a Friday, too, and that day has ever been regarded in all countries as an unlucky one."

"Because it was the day on which our Saviour died," said Ian, uncovering his head; "and doubtless," he added with a smile, "it is an unlucky day on which to march, to fight, to hunt, or to marry; but as for being born—Dioul! as *that* is an event over which we possess no control in our own proper persons, I cannot see any ill fortune in it. And you will quit your student's cap for the bright helmet, your studies for the camp and leaguer, without regret?"

"Without regret, and with ardour!"

"It is true that here, at Craigrollo, you have no great scope for indulging your taste for book-learning——"

"Our literary resources are indeed small; for the only book in the tower is Bishop Carsewell's Prayer-Book for the Reformed Kirk, which Robert Lickprivick printed in Gaëlic, in 1567, and even that lacks half its leaves, Ewen having used them as wadding for his pistols."

This gallant mountaineer, to whom my heart drew the more closely because there were few or none else for whom it could care, marched back to his native glen with his people, and I waited anxiously for his expected letter.

Punctually at the close of the fourteenth day, Ian's henchman, Phadrig Mhor M'Farquhar, a tall strong Highlander, presented himself at the tower of the Craig, and taking a letter from his sporran, kissed the seal to show that it had been respected, and handed it to me with the deepest reverence, for it contained the handwriting of his chief. While Mhona, who was now house-keeper, gave refreshments and a stoup of whisky to Phadrig Mhor, I opened his missive, which proved as unintelligible to me as Sanscrit, being written in that ancient character the *Litir Eireinich*, or Gaëlic letter, which bears some resemblance to the Hebrew, but was even then (1626) becoming somewhat obsolete and antiquated. I was compelled to have recourse to old Dominie Daidle, by whose aid I learned that the missive ran as follows :—

"For my Right Honourable Cousin, Philip Rollo of the Craig—these.

"LOVING COUSIN,—I have conferred with our kinsman, Mackay of Strathnaver, and he was proud to have the honour of appointing you to be an ensign in my company of pikes. Our cousin M'Alpine is your lieutenant, so that it will be no dishonour to be commanded by one who shares our blood. Sir Donald will embark with the entire regiment for Denmark in two king's ships, which are to be waiting us in the Bay of Cromartie, immediately below your father's tower, about the end of this month; so that, against that time, I beg you will prepare your best coat-of-mail, consisting of back, breast, and pot, together with the *breacan fheile* of the Mackay tartan.

"I need scarcely remind you again of how many brave Scots, by their good swords, their true hearts, and indomitable valour, have raised themselves from humbler rank than ours, to the highest honours a subject can attain, in the courts and camps of that glorious arena on which we are about to enter! Loving cousin, the wide world is all before us, and we have our fathers' swords! If we live to return to the land of the Gaël, I hope we shall do so covered with wounds (here the dominie shrugged his shoulders) and with honour; if we fall, we shall do so gloriously, fighting for the civil and religious liberties of Europe. We may die far from our homes; but, believe me, the dew of heaven, as it falls on our unburied faces, will not be the only tears shed over us, Philip. I have but one real regret—that we may find our last home so far from the homes of our kindred; for the dying wish of the true Highlander is ever to be laid in the grave of his fathers, beneath the purple heather and the yellow broom. But away with such fears, for it matters little where a heart moulders, if that heart be true; and so, with the assurance that you will be in readiness to meet us in the day we march into Cromartie, I commit you, loving cousin, to the protection of God.

"MACFARQUHAR.

"*Post Scriptum*.—The bearer, my cousin and henchman, who is to be a sergeant in our said regiment of Strathnaver, will afford you all other information."

CHAPTER III.

SIR DONALD AND HIS REGIMENT.

FROM an eminent armourer in the Castlegate of the Brave Town of Aberdeen, I had purchased a suit of plain but well-tempered armour, such as a gentleman might wear, and such as no

gentleman could be without in those days, before the wars of the Covenant. It consisted of back and breast plates, curiously inlaid with many rare and quaint devices; steel gloves, arm-pieces, a gorget and open helmet, with three iron bars, to protect the face from sword-cuts. As leg-pieces had now gone out of fashion, and withal I was to wear a kilt like my comrades, tassettes were not required. I had a good pair of our Scottish pistols, with iron butts, a back sword and dagger. These cost me many pounds Scots, all of which I had saved, with some trouble, from the small sums sent me by my poor mother, per the favour of John Mucklecuits, the Aberdeen carrier.

On receiving the letter of Ian, I showed it to my father, and so strong was his silly prejudice against me, that he said—with an unmoved aspect which stung me to the soul—he feared much I would never return again; for my uncle Philip, whose mouth was too small for the spoon of Sir Ringan, never again darkened the door of *his* father, and so forth; but, having pledged my word to our kinsman, I must march, or rather sail for Low Germanie, whither his blessing would assuredly follow me.

Filled with ardour at the prospect before me, and the life of wild and warlike adventure, happiness, and pleasure (for such I deemed it) on which I was about to enter, I spent my whole time in putting on and taking off my harness, polishing the pieces, burnishing the handles of my sword and Glasgow pistols, until they shone like silver; and I hailed with joy the appearance of two of our Scottish ships of war, which, on rising from bed one morning, I saw at anchor in the Firth of Cromartie. The early dawn was beautiful, and I remember well how gallantly those vessels rode, with their heads to the wind, and the pennons of St. Andrew streaming astern.

Sent round from Leith, by order of the Privy Council and of His Grace James Stewart, Duke of Lennox, who in that year was Lord Great Chamberlain and Lord High Admiral of Scotland, they were the *Unicorn* and *Crown Royal*, two of our bravest ships. Each of them carried thirty gross culverins, and had two galleries on each side. Their poops and aftercastles, which rose like towers above the water, were carved over with trophies of artillery, and blazons of honour. Their cabins were all loopholed for musket shot, and two gallant frigates they were as ever unfurled our Scottish flag above the waters. And so I thought, as on that beautiful morning in September I saw them riding in the noble bay, with their gilded sides, the polished muzzles of their brass cannon, and their snow-white canvass shining in the rising sun. Their captains breakfasted at the tower of Craigrolla, and about midday, with a beating heart, I began to arm me in good earnest; for afar off, on the western

hills, the glitter of steel announced that my future comrades from the wilds of Ross were approaching the shore.

The bitter pang of leaving my father's roof, perhaps for ever; of breaking bread where I might never break it more; of performing the little routine and courtesies of our family circle, each as I felt sorrowfully for the *last* time, had all to be endured on that morning. My father's austere look was softened, and it seemed at times that his usually cold eye almost glistened when he gazed on me. I thought that my three uncouth brothers were kinder and gentler than was their wont. All this might be fancy, but my heart was full. I was hearing their voices for the last time, I was going far away for a long and indefinite period; the future was full of danger and obscurity, and never more might I be under my father's roof-tree. But I flung these chilling thoughts from me as one would do a wet plaid, and betook me to my armour.

For the first time I put on my kilt and hose, and, to my surprise, found that they were not only exceedingly warm, but easy and comfortable; much more so than the bombasted breeches I had hitherto worn.

The aspect of Sir Donald's men, this brave regiment of Strathnaver, whose name in future wars was fated to carry terror and defeat into the ranks of the Austrian and Spanish Imperialists, would have fired even a coward-heart with a glow of chivalry, as on that morning they marched down, by the shores of the Firth of Cromartie, fifteen hundred strong; raised entirely among his own clan and kinsmen in Farr, Strathnaver, and Strathalladale, together with a few Munroes and Gunns. The regiment of Sir Donald well deserved the name given it in the "*Svedish Intelligencer*," the *Scottish Invincibles*.

Though it was the fashion in foreign armies to have companies of infantry varying from one hundred and fifty to three hundred men, those of Sir Donald were regularly composed of one hundred men each, the officers being invariably the kinsmen of their soldiers; thus my cousin Ian led the company of M'Farquhars, and young Culgragie the company of Munroes; the Laird of Tulloch led a company of the clan Forbes, and old Kildon the company of Mackenzies, and so on. In the Lowlands, and among the English, it was then customary to have a colour for each company, with a certain number of halberdiers to guard it, then so many musketeers to flank the halberts, while the pikes in turn flanked the muskets; but the regiment of Strathnaver, with five hundred pikes and a thousand muskets, had only two standards, our Scottish national ensign, and the great banner of Mackay, bearing a chevron argent, charged with a *Reabuck's* head, and two hounds grasping dirks. The same

designs were painted on all the drums, and on the little flags that waved from the pipers' drones.

The whole fifteen hundred were uniformly accoutred in steel caps and buff coats, the officers being fully armed in bright plate to the waist, and having plumes in their headpieces; their kilts were of dark green tartan, and belted up to the left shoulder, according to the custom of Highlandmen when going on service. The musketeers carried their powder in bandoliers; and, in addition to his dirk, every officer and man wore the claymore, or genuine old Highland sword, which could be used with both hands. Their purses were of white goatskin, and profusely adorned with silver.

Marching in sections of six abreast, this noble regiment poured down the steep and narrow pass overhung by Craigrolo, and I shall never forget how my heart expanded when I beheld them moving far down below where I stood, with their colours waving, the tall reedy pikes, the burnished musket-barrels, helmets, and breastplates glittering in the sun; the waving of the tartans; the regular motion of the bare brown knees and gartered hose; the hoarse bray of ten great war-pipes, and the hoarser battle of fifteen drums, beating the old Scottish march, and making wood, rock, and water echo, as if the thunder of heaven was floating over them. The waving plaids and nodding plumes, the flashing steel and martial music, the measured tramp of so many marching feet, all combined to raise a wild glow in my bosom, and I exulted to think that *I was one of these*, and never assuredly did finer men depart for foreign wars. They were the flower of Ross and the Lewis, but chiefly from *Duthaich Mhic Aio*, or the Land of the Mackays; and many of them exhibited a strength and stature such as our Lowlanders never attain, having always at their command the best of game and venison, with all manner of animal food, for the mere trouble of shooting or slaying.*

Though accoutred like the rest, and wearing the Mackay tartan, I knew the company of M'Farquhars by the badges in their steel caps, and by the remarkable plume of Ian, who marched at their head. It was the whole wing of an eagle, with the feathers expanded over the cone of his helmet, which gave him all the formidable aspect of a Roman warrior. As I descended the rocks, he sprang from the ranks to greet me.

"My cousin and captain," said I, laughing, "a thousand welcomes to Cromartie!"

"Philip, a thousand welcomes to our ranks! My children," he added in Gaelic to his company, "this gentleman is one of ourselves—'tis our kinsman, Rollo of the Craig—his mother was

* How different with the poor Highlanders now!

a daughter of our race; remember *that*, and be his *Leine Chrios* (his shirt of mail) in every danger."

A wild Highland hurrah was Ian's response.

While the regiment marched down towards the beach, Sir Donald of Strathnaver, my colonel, in obedience to a courteous invitation which I tendered him in my father's name, turned aside to visit our poor tower on the Craig, and, attended only by his henchman, and a piper who played before him, rode his horse slowly and carefully up the steep and rocky path which led to the outer gate.

Mackay was somewhat lofty and reserved in manner, but brave and generous as a prince of romance; his dark grey eyes were keen and bright; his form was sinewy, but flexible and full of grace; he was about forty years of age, and, although long reputed to be one of the most ferocious and predatory among the western chiefs, he had a singularly pleasing suavity of manner. All the Highlands were then ringing with the story of the terrible vengeance he had recently taken on the bandits who dwelt in the vast cave of Ben Radh, a mountain in his parish of Reay; and I gazed on him with no ordinary interest, for he was the chief to whom I had committed my fortunes, and whom I was to follow to far and foreign battle-fields.

Two sturdy Highland pages carried his armour; and thus the handsome olive doublet, which he wore slashed, after the Spanish fashion, imparted a somewhat courtly aspect to his lordly figure, and formed an agreeable contrast to his tartan truis, his steel gauntlets, and cliobh, or basket-hilted sword. Conforming to the spirit of his forefathers, who, coeval with the Lollards of Kyle, had been among the earliest promoters of the Reformation, this brave chief raised at different times no less than three thousand men for the German wars; such was his enthusiasm in the cause of religious freedom and of Elizabeth Stuart, the daughter of James VI., whom, with her husband Frederick, the Austrians had driven from the kingdom of Bohemia.

I cared not for the Elector Frederick, for we Scots deemed him but a pitiful German princeling; but I sympathised with the fair queen who had honoured him with her hand, for she was a Stuart and a Scot, born in our ancient palace of Linlithgow; and, when at college, I had heard much of the sufferings which her husband's base cowardice compelled her to endure after the great battle of Prague. Yearly our stout-hearted Scots were crowding in thousands to the German wars; I longed, like them, to have an opportunity of avenging her on the cruel and aggressive Imperialists; and it was this sentiment which shed the glory of chivalry around our mission.

Our hereditary enemies, the English, who naturally hated u

as Scots, were wont to taunt us as mercenaries, who sold our swords and our blood to the highest bidder; though, God wot! we got more blows and bullets than silver dollars in Low Germanie; and once, by the banks of the Rhine, for lack of those same silver dollars, I saw old General Morgan's brigade of English and Dutch refuse to attack the enemy, when our Scottish invincibles, and a regiment of gallant Irishmen, fell briskly on, and did their work with pike and rapier.

CHAPTER IV.

WE SAIL FOR THE ELBE.

THE culverins of the *Unicorn* and *Crown Royal* fired a salute to the chief of Strathnaver as we embarked, on the first day of October, though contrary winds delayed us till the tenth, when we set sail. I have an indistinct recollection of feeling then a suffocating sense of sorrow—the more bitter and suffocating because pride compelled me to repress it—sorrow at finding myself fairly adrift from my old parental home; and the pressure of my father's hand, the first kindly pressure it had ever bestowed on mine, yet lingered there; and, amid the din and hurry of the embarkation, I still seemed to hear his parting blessing, mingled with the obstreperous lamentations of old Dominie Daidle, to whom I promised to bring a real metal horologue from Germany, which was then famous for that new invention.

The anchor was weighed, and the sails spread; the sun was setting behind the mountains; the shores of the Black Isle receded fast; the figures on the beach lessened to small black dots, and then faded away. My father's tower grew less and less, while the old chapel of St. Regulus, where my mother lay in her dark and narrow home, had long since disappeared. There was a roar and din of voices around me, and it seemed sad and strange, that the good being who had loved me so dearly should know nothing of this eventful day, which threw me on the world like a leaf on the blast; but, as I gazed upwards on the blue sky, I hoped that her eye was still upon me.

The waters of the Firth were gleaming in gold, and the clouds cast a purple shadow on their bosom.

The deep green or russet-brown tints of the hills gradually became blue, and as I lay against a culverin, watching—with a heavy heart—the setting sun and the receding shore, I felt, like the hundreds around me, very sorrowful and very sick.

I knew that when again the sun whitened our sails, we should see those old familiar hills no more. The wind favoured, and a

the strong current which is ever passing in, or flowing out between the steep Sutors, ran with us, the two ships rolled heavily. On our larboard lay the old town of Cromartie, and as we passed, a great copper bombarde, which belonged to the provost, was repeatedly discharged in our honour. A flag was displayed at the ancient cross, which was then at the town-end; though I had heard my poor mother tell me, that its place was wont to be the centre of the royal burgh, before the sea swallowed up one half its streets, the ruins of which, covered with sea-weed, were visible to us as we passed along the shore.

The cavern of M'Farquhar's Bed seemed to open and shut again as we shot past it; we were soon between the stupendous brows of the Sutors, against whose shining rocks vast sheets of snow-white foam were hurled by the Murray Firth, though within the bay we were leaving—perhaps for ever—the water was smooth as a mountain lake. Being sharply built, and swift sailers, our ships glided through the narrow passage like shafts from a bow, and almost immediately the shores of the inner firth, the town of Cromartie, Craigrollo with its tower—already diminished to a speck—vanished from our view; and, like an ocean-gate fenced by the Sutors, two mighty towers of rock, with a narrow stripe of water between, was all that remained of the place we had left. The tide was ebbing, and the sunken reefs, known as *The King's Seven Sons*, were showing their naked and ghastly heads above the foam; there, as Mhona Toshach told me, the seven sons of a king had perished by shipwreck.

The features of the shore lessened and changed in hue and aspect, while the deep green water was thrown up beneath our bows in spray, leaving under our quarter galleries a long track of white froth on the ocean path behind us; but no sooner were the vessels clear of the Sutors, than a very sensible alteration in their motion made us remember that they were ploughing the stormy waves of the Firth of Murray, amid whose waters I saw the hills of Cromartie, reddened by the last flush of the sun that had set, sink gradually low, and melt, as it were, away.

Till darkness settled on the northern deep, the sides of the ships were lined with soldiers, who gazed with sad and eager eyes at the last blue stripe of their native land; many wept, and uttered emphatic ejaculations of sorrow, with all the poetical energy of their native Gaëlic.

Though feeling far from comfortable in many respects, I drew to the side of M'Farquhar, who, being accustomed to boating expeditions on the vast lochs of the Great Glen, kept his feet manfully; and, as the shore and the daylight had faded away together, he was now gazing by the light of the moon on the large silver brooch which fastened his tartan plaid.

"A love-gift, Ian?" said I.

His dark eyes flashed in the moonlight, as he replied with one of his honest smiles—

"Yes—the brooch of Moina Rose, which she gave me before we parted at the chapel of Kill Chuimin. If I should be slain, Philip, you will take it back to Moina, by the hills that look down on Loch Oich?"

"I will, Ian; but if I, too, should be slain——"

"Chut! then some other brave fellow will surely live to do so. There is Munro of Culcraigie, or Mackenzie of Kildon, or our kinsman, Phadrig Mhor, for we cannot all be knocked on the head. My poor Moina!"

"Take care you do not forget her among the blue-eyed Danish damsels."

"Forget!" reiterated Ian, with honest warmth; "I swore by the great Chief of the Universe, and by our fathers' graves in Iona, to be faithful and true to Moina, and, as we dipped our hands together in St. Chuimin's well, she pledged the same to me. Nay, nay, Philip, judge me not as you would by a rake-helly student of the King's College."

Ian kissed the brooch, which is the dearest gift of a Highland love; for, among the mountains, the bridegroom gives his bride, not a ring, but a brooch, engraved with some heraldic device, or affectionate inscription, and as the same gift served for many generations, those love-tokens became priceless reliques of remembrance, by their hallowed and enduring associations, and such was the brooch of Moina. It had been her mother's, and Ian was to wear it until he returned to espouse her in Kill Chuimin.

"And why did you leave her, Ian?"

"Eighteen months ago—fully six months before I was so happy as to know and to love her, at a great hunting match on the braes of Lochaber, I unfortunately pledged my word to Sir Donald that I would go with him to Germany. Like a generous gentleman, he offered to release me from my promise; but a hundred of my people expected that I was to lead them, and I alone; thus it would ill become M'Farquhar to keep his sword in the scabbard when he had pledged his word to unsheath it. I could have made Moina mine before I left the hills of our race; for a missionary priest, who acts as chaplain to her family, Sheumas Stiubhart, or James of Jerusalem, as the Lowlanders call him, offered to unite us secretly at Kill Chuimin; but I would not run the risk of leaving Moina a wedded mourner, a widowed bride, like the dames of Fingal's warriors, who spent half their time sitting upon the seashore, with hair unbound and harp in hand, looking towards the ocean for the return of their absent spouses. Thus, if in three years and three days I come

not again, I will hold Moira free to be wooed and free to be won by another."

Ian's voice quavered, though he endeavoured to assume an air of bravado, but I saw through the sickly effort.

"From your gay manner yesterday, Ian, I deemed you happiest of the happy; but, doubtless, every heart has some inward sorrow which the eye sees not."

"True, true, the loudest laugh does not always come from the lightest heart."

"Thank God!" said I, observing how his dark eye glistened, "that I have no regret of this kind to render yet more sad this day of parting with my home."

"Be happy, Philip," said he; "for all who love you truly are here—myself and the hundred brave men of your mother's name, who follow the banner of Mackay."

"And you will return in three years?"

"If alive, I will return in *one* year, despite the offers of our Lowland Chancellor, who has promised me a feudal charter of my hereditary estate, to be granted under the great seal at Holyrood, on the day we enter Prague. Dioul! as if M'Farquhar valued the right that was held otherwise than as it was won, by the edge of the sword. Nay, nay, as Donald of the Isles said, I hold my lands by *this* (laying his hand on his claymore), and not by a sheepskin."

CHAPTER V.

GLUCKSTADT.

HIS Danish Majesty, the gallant King Christian IV., whom we were about to reinforce, was at this time waging with the vast forces of the empire an unequal warfare, in the same cause which the great Gustavus Adolphus, a few years after, maintained successfully, though he did not survive to behold the conclusion of that bitter contest, which from the gates of Prague spread along the banks of the Po and the shores of the Baltic.

The edict of toleration granted by the Emperor Rodolph II. to the Bohemians had been revoked; and thus they rose in arms. They had been defeated at the White Mountain, where the chivalry of the empire trod the standards of the Elector Frederick in the dust, and the laurels of the Imperialists were drenched in Protestant blood. Though wedded to a Princess of the House of Scotland, the elector was the basest of cowards, and fled, leaving his queen to her fate. Two hundred thousand persons had been driven into exile; and though the illustrious Count of Mansfeld and Christian Duke of Bavaria, for a time defended the Bohemians,

mians and the Reformed faith with the most heroic valour, they were driven headlong before the conquering Tilly, whose ferocious legions burst like a torrent into Lower Saxony, giving all to fire and sword, and carrying terror and despair into the hearts of the Protestants.

It was at this desperate crisis, and while Gustavus of Sweden was warring with Poland, that Christian IV. of Denmark, anxious to have the entire glory of saving the Reformed Church of Germany from utter destruction, commenced, as it were, a new crusade against the mighty power of the Emperor Ferdinand, and drew to his banner the flower of the Saxon circles and of the Danish isles, and I may add, of our own dear Scottish mountains; for, in addition to nearly fourteen thousand Scots who followed the standard of Gustavus, there were in the Danish army, in addition to our own regiment of fifteen hundred men, Sir Alexander Seaton's, of five hundred; Sir James Leslie's, of a thousand musketeers; while in the same year we were joined by John Maxwell, Earl of Nithsdale. Alexander Lindesay, Lord Spynie (a gallant grandson of Cardinal Beaton), and Sir James Sinclair, son of John Master of Caithness, levied each a regiment of three battalions; and each battalion being a thousand strong, made altogether about eleven thousand Scottish soldiers who were marching under the Danish cross.*

The noble King Christian, then the rival of the Swedish conqueror, from his peculiar position, as sovereign of Lower Saxony, of Jutland, and of Denmark (the isles of which secured for him a strong retreat in case of reverses), had many advantages which induced the Protestant powers to give him the command of those forces raised by them to protect the liberties of Germany. Christian urged on Gustavus the necessity of co-operation; but that brave prince being at war with Poland, the Dane was left single-handed, and fearlessly he undertook the terrible task of waging battle with the overgrown empire.

Trusting to those supplies which were promised to him from every part of Reformed Christendom, he had attended the convocation of the Saxon states, held at Lauenburg, in March, 1625, where he entered into a league with the rich burghers who inhabited the free cities of the circle, and was chosen Captain-General of the confederate army, which was to muster in the duchy of Holstein. From thence, with 25,000 Danes, Scots, and Germans, he crossed the Elbe, and was joined at the Weser by 7000 Saxons.

Under Tilly, the forces of the Catholic league hovered on the opposite bank; while Wallenstein, attacking Count Mansfeldt at

* Here the Denmyline MSS. corroborate our Cavalier.

Dessau, cut to pieces 10,000 Protestants, and received the title of Prince of Friedland. Mansfeldt died of a broken heart. Duke Christian died soon after; and thus the Danish monarch was left alone to cope with the two greatest generals the Empire ever possessed.

One town after another became their prey, and at a decisive battle fought near the castle and village of Lütter in Barenberg, the Danes and their Scottish allies were defeated by the Catholics, with the loss of sixty standards, their whole artillery, many officers of distinction, and four thousand men, who were left dead upon the field.

This was on the 27th August, 1626, a full month before we sailed from Cromartie. This severe blow at Lütter compelled Christian to retreat to Stade, in the duchy of Bremen, and to that place we supposed Sir Donald would march the small portion he commanded of the quota sent by our mother Caledonia to the German war.

After an easy voyage of five days, during which the *Unicorn* and *Crown Royal* never lost sight of each other, on the 15th of October we entered the broad bosom of the Elbe; and, just as the hazy sun was setting, dropped our anchors in the mud, opposite Glückstadt, a little city on the northern or right bank of the river.

The spire of the great church, and the cannon on the ramparts, were shining in the last rays of the sun, and the many trees which encircled the fortifications gave a pleasant aspect to the place. The harbour is large, and at the end of the canal which ran from it into the town, there was a large tower built on piles of oak, encircled by platforms having batteries of cannon to command the Elbe. This tower has long since disappeared. Our cannon saluted the Danish cross which was flying on the wooden tower, the cannon of which replied by a salute of forty pieces to our double flags; for, according to the order of his Majesty James VI., issued in 1606, we carried the interlaced crosses of St. Andrew and St. George at our main-masthead, and the Scottish ensign on the colour staff at our stern. Soon after we anchored, Sir David Drummond (a cavalier of the house of Meedhope), who commanded two thousand Danish foot in the city, came off in a gay pinnace to bid us welcome, and pay his respects to our colonel, the great Sir Donald Mackay of Farr and Strathnaver.

Being Scotsmen, we naturally looked for hills in surveying the coast; but we might as well have looked for the pyramids of Egypt; for there were only swampy morasses lying on both sides of the turgid Elbe, which was dyked, to keep out the water from the fields where the fat sleepy cattle were chewing the cud, surrounded by rich grass, and the drowsy hum of the evening flies.

The broad river flowed slowly and turgidly, and being im-

pregnated with mud, was all of a yellow colour, unlike the pure deep blue of those fierce torrents, that, bearing trees and rocks with them, rush from the giant mountains of our native land. The fortifications were built on piles, and innumerable water-rats were swimming and paddling among the mud and slime that oozed between the timber.

Though the sun was shining, a frowsy pestilential fog rested on the bosom of the river, and overhung the town; there was a closeness, a stillness in the atmosphere, which imparted a strange dulness to the place, and seemed to infect us; for our soldiers, while they crowded the sides of the vessels, instead of being full of gesture and animation like Highlanders, were silent and inert, like the fat old burghers who sat on the parapets, smoking their long Dutch pipes, without any sign of motion or life. The sentinels stood like statues on the ramparts, and the motionless pikes glittered like stars in the sunlight.

By break of day next morning—at least an hour before the sun had risen from the flat morasses, and while the same white mist was resting on the river—we disembarked in large flat-bottomed boats, and drew up in order under our colours, by companies on the quay, while our pipes played Mackay's pibroch, *Brattach bhan clan Aiodh*, till the Holsteiners stuck their fingers in their ears, and the stones of the street shook below us.

Here Captain Torquil M'Coll of that ilk lost his brother, who was sergeant of his pikes. Falling overboard into the muddy river, despite all our efforts to save him, the poor man sank under the weight of his headpiece, back, breast and bracelets, and was drowned, or rather suffocated. In my haste to succour this unfortunate, when floundering among the hideous mud, I nearly fell in after him, but was saved by Ian grasping my plaid.

"Dioul!" said he, "the tide is out—are you mad? the water is thick as piper's brose—the man is lost—would you, too, lose your life?"

It was fortunate my strong kinsman seized me, otherwise I might have perished with M'Coll. The sergeant was a brave man, and had fought for his majesty James VI. at the battle of Belrinnes, twenty-eight years before.

That maxim of the great Count Tilly, "a ragged soldier with a bright musket," applied not to us, for our harness was polished as bright as when the armourer had sent it from his shop; and I was astonished by the finery displayed among our poorest private soldiers. The mouths of their sporrans, the brooches of their plaids, and the hilts of their dirks, were either ornamented with silver, or such precious stones as their own mountains afforded—the topaz, the amethyst, the cairngorm, and the river pearl; for it was their ambition that, if they were slain, or should

die far from their home, there should be wherewithal on their persons, to pay for a respectable funeral.

My brave comrades! too many of them were doomed to find no other grave than the maws of the gorged and hideous crows that hovered over the battle-fields of Low Germanie, when the boom of the culverin summoned them from the four winds of heaven to their terrible feast.

We were formed in line, three ranks deep, on the quay, and there were exactly one thousand five hundred and forty men in their helmets; the colours, with the pipes and drums, were in the centre; the pikemen flanked the musketeers. Well mounted, and clad in a magnificent suit of Italian plate, which was covered with so many rare and gold devices that it was usually believed to be enchanted, Sir Donald, with his claymore drawn, gave the words of command rapidly, as became a cavalier of spirit,

"Gentlemen, height your musketeers—dress your ranks, pikemen! To the right—turn; quick march."

The colours bent forward rustling in the wind, five hundred pikes and a thousand muskets were sloped in the sunshine, and with our drums beating that brave Scottish march, which has led so often to death but never to defeat, we entered Glückstadt, being duly saluted at the gates with all the honours of war, by the Laird of Craigie's regiment of Danes, who formed line, with pikes advanced and drums beating.

This city of Glückstadt had been so strongly fortified by King Christian IV., in 1620, that it held out against the besieging forces of the Emperor Ferdinand II. for two years, and defied the whole power of the Imperialists to take it by sea; and, being then all unused to regularly-fortified towns, to me it seemed the strongest place in the world. Its locality was originally a mere swamp, and there is still a possibility of laying the whole out-works under water. We crossed several of the canals by which it is intersected, as we marched through the narrow streets into the quaint and old-fashioned market-place, where we halted before the great church, which stands at one corner thereof, and wherein the German colonists and the old Catholics were both allowed a chapel for their own worship—a toleration and good-fellowship which somewhat surprised our Scottish cavaliers, who believed it could exist nowhere but in the Highlands; for there the real and traditional ties of clanship were dearer and stronger than those of religion, the powers of the patriarchal chief being superior alike to those of priest and presbyter.

In the market-place we received our billets from the burgo-master; and by good fortune, as it afterwards proved, my cousin the captain, M'Alpine our lieutenant, and myself, were quartered in one house—a tall building, situated immediately over against the great church.

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER ESCAPING A FALL INTO THE ELBE, I AM IN DANGER OF
FALLING IN LOVE.

THOUGH the majority of the inhabitants of Glückstadt had retired to adjacent villages or elsewhere, on the town being occupied by foreign troops, a considerable crowd surrounded us in the market-place, attracted no doubt by the martial and imposing aspect of the garb we wore. The women—they interested me most, of course—seemed to be all rather pretty, with blooming complexions and fair tresses; and I—being fresh from King's College—was reminded of those yellow-haired dwellers by the banks of the Elbe, of whom I had read in Lucan. They were all gaudily dressed in hoods, cloaks, and fardingales, of many colours, among which the Danish red predominated.

By command of the magistrates, the whole regiment had free quartering on the burgesses; and thus, after marching our colours, under a guard of pikes with pipes sounding, to the residence of Sir Donald, who had been invited to occupy the mansion of our good countryman the governor, I looked about for my billet, which, as I have said, was at a corner of the Platz, and almost opposite the great church of the town.

The house was a large building of Dutch brick and plaster, crossed in various ways by diagonal bars of wood, like many of the old timber-fronted "Lodgings" in the borough-towns at home in the Lowlands; it had a row of poplars before it, and was surmounted by a high-peaked roof, with a double tier of dormer windows. Several solemn-looking storks sat on the sharp ridges, twisting their long throats and clapping their wings. I would not have discovered the place (each fantastic house being just like its neighbour) but for the kindness of a cavalier whom I met in the street, and knew by his white silk scarf to be one of my countrymen. This was the renowned Sir Quentin Home, rittmaster of a corps of mounted Holsteiners, of whom more anon. On showing him my billet order, addressed *Otto Roskilde, Hausmeister*, he led me at once to the place.

Like the houses of the Scottish and French towns, this mansion had six or seven stories, opening on each side from one common staircase; but, as nearly all its inhabitants had either fled or perished of the plague, there were but two flats occupied, and one of these was by a personage who styled himself the Hausmeister, having been appointed by the proprietor, as he afterwards told me, to watch over the building and its tenants, and generally to attend to its safety and preservation. Among the Austrians, I have since met with many such officials, who were considered little better than gate-porters or link-boys; but

my Holsteiner, or Dane, or Dutchman (for I could not discover what country claimed the honour of giving him birth), received me with all the formality of the governor of a fortress welcoming his successor. There was an ill-concealed scowl on his forbidding face as he met me at the door, on which I had knocked loudly more than once, with the hilt of my dirk, before it was opened.

"Otto Roskilde?" said I, inquiringly, showing my slip of paper, stamped with the town arms.

He replied with a "Yes," which sounded like a long yawn, and bowed. He was a great and powerful fellow, with a broad tiger-like mouth, and sinister eyes, that shone like pieces of grey glass. He wore enormous red roses on his shoes; a plum-coloured doublet, a pair of bombasted fardingale breeches, Spanish leather boots with lawn tops, a high sugar-loaf hat which every puff of wind that shook the poplars threatened to blow away; a long Dutch espadone and spurs, though I suppose the fellow never had a horse in his stable, or rode any other nag than the wooden mare, or *cheval de bois*, with a six-pound shot at each of his heels. To my words of compliment—craving pardon for my intrusion and so forth—he answered by another profound bow, which tilted up the end of his great sword; then, ushering me in, he shut the door, and left me to shift for myself.

The staircase was dark, the building silent; I felt as if still in the rolling ship, and my footing seemed wavering and uncertain, as I ascended. Every apartment sounded hollow, and appeared to be empty—unfurnished and uncarpeted. I knew that my billet was to be on the third floor, and continued my ascent, but by mistake tried the doors on the second. Six different apartments which I entered were empty, destitute of furniture, cold, desolate, and rendered damp by the slimy atmosphere of the canal which flowed beneath the window. I was on the point of retiring, and descending again to seek this rude and unceremonious host or Hausmeister, who treated me with such inattention, when before me there appeared a door half open, revealing beyond an apartment, that was, at least, furnished.

"Zounds!" thought I, "right at last—this is the floor, and that is my room!"

I knocked gently, however, but without receiving an answer; pushed the door fully open, and entering, found myself in a bed-chamber furnished with innumerable articles of ornament and luxury.

In the chimney, which was lined with the blue ware of Delft, a cheerful fire burned on the hearth, between the brass-knobbed andirons. Warm tapestry covered the walls, which were hung with pictures and gaudily-tinted engravings, by the great Westphalian engraver, Israel Van Meknen, who died in the last

century; statues of alabaster and vases of flowers, jars of red Bohemian glass and little figures, decorated the mantelpiece and oak side-tables; a guitar and music book lay on a chair in one corner; a small library occupied another, and within a recess stood a most enchanting little bed, with graceful silk drapery. There, indeed, beauty might sleep softly, intrenched among downy pillows edged with the finest lace.

"All this for me?" I muttered aloud. "Oh, no! it cannot be—there is some mistake."

One glance had just made me acquainted with all these items of luxury, when another made me aware that this pretty little boudoir, or bedchamber, had an occupant; for on a sofa, which stood between me and the fireplace, a young lady lay fast asleep, with a book in her hand. She had fine features, a brilliant complexion, long lashes, and the most luxuriant jet hair. Her figure was small and graceful in its contour; her hands and fine bosom white as snow, for though she wore a high ruff, it opened considerably in front. She had on a great tub-fardingale of crimson satin, with a monstrous hoop, like those of the Countess of Essex (of happy memory), flounced and slashed with black velvet; but this, instead of spoiling her figure, from her position gave it rather a new charm; for it permitted more than usual to be seen of two very handsome taper ankles, encased in scarlet silk stockings, which were embroidered with silver about eight inches above the shoe, in the Spanish fashion.

In the whole aspect of this sleeping beauty there was a nameless charm, which extremely interested me. Courtesy compelled me to retire immediately; but I could not restrain my desire to know what book she had been reading, and it proved to be a Spanish drama by Cervantes, that brave soldier whose name will ever reflect immortal lustre on the noble profession of arms.

Charmed with the air of innocence and candour which pervaded this unknown beauty, I would fain have kissed the little hand that drooped over one arm of the sofa; but hearing voices, I softly and hastily withdrew, mentally resolving—like a rogue who had fought his way through all the classes of the King's College—that our acquaintance should end less abruptly than it had begun.

Ascending to the third story of the great and seemingly desolate house, I found myself in presence of my cousin Ian, and our lieutenant M'Alpine, for, as I have said, we had all been happily billeted in the same edifice; and in one of its unfurnished chambers Phadrig Mohr was lighting a fire, and preparing a meal with all the ease and rapidity of a Highland mountaineer.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REPAST.

"WELCOME, Philip, as we are here before you," said Ian; "in the name of mischief's mother, where have you been wandering to?"

"Over all this empty house, which I vow is like a great castle, and is almost without furniture."

"Almost," replied Ian; "why, my cousin, except this room, and that one occupied by the Hausmeister, it seems quite deserted. Its inhabitants have all died of the plague——"

"The plague!—pleasant that, for their successors."

"This was four years ago; or else they have fled to Copenhagen, to escape the chances and mischances of war—the troubles (as the Hausmeister calls them) which always attend the march of foreign troops."

"Troubles?" said I.

"Ay," replied our lieutenant, Angus Roy M'Alpine, who had been in the Low Countries and Germany before; "troubles—for so the Hausmeister was pleased to name free inquartering, and the occasional abduction of a pretty maid or a wine-cask, things that will now and then happen where soldiers shake their feathers."

"He is an ill-looking dog, that Hausmeister," I observed, "and wears a devilish odd hat and pair of breeches—I hate the aspect of the varlet!"

"Hate no one, Philip," said M'Alpine, quietly; "for hatred and anger are sure to go together—and sorrow perchance may follow; but I instinctively dislike this person, too."

M'Alpine, a fine-looking soldier, and brave fellow, was somewhat of a gloomy and thoughtful cast. Having once slain a friend in a single combat (as we were informed)—the result of a sudden quarrel—he made a vow to wear crape on his left arm till the end of his days, and never to give another challenge, though he had often received them, and been compelled to fight more than once in defence of his honour and reputation."

"I am sorry you are averse to the Holsteiner," said Ian; "for I have invited him to dine with us."

"Dine!" we exclaimed together; "surely it was more his part to have invited us."

"Four hungry Highlandmen to dine with one German or Dane," replied Ian; "oich! gentlemen, the thing was not to be thought of."

"I hope I shall not quarrel with him," I continued, remember-

ing how he had received me; "in those green eyes of his are the very smile of a Campbell."

"And you know the adage?" added Ian, as he flung aside his sword, plaid, and pistols.

"While there are leaves on the trees, there will be guile——"

"Do not say in a Campbell," said the sergeant, Mhor, pausing in his culinary occupation, and bluntly interrupting M'Alpine; "do not say so, lieutenant, for my great-grandmother was a daughter of Barcaldine."

"I crave your pardon, sergeant," replied M'Alpine; "but my father, Torquil Dhu, was slain at Glenlivat by the men of Loch Awe, and I have a score to settle with that tribe."

"Hush!" said I, "here comes our Dane."

"Dane—dost thou call him?" said Angus; "nay, being a Holsteiner, he is pure German."

"What a clatter he makes!"

"Tis his espadone on the stair."

"Dioul!" said my cousin; "and now let us to dinner."

We all rose to receive this personage, whom our Highland education made us disposed to treat with the utmost respect as the master of the house, or *kushonde*, as the Danes would call him (though only his deputy); Ian bade him welcome in Gaëlic, and Phadrig Mhor, whose vast stature made the Northman open wide his eyes, placed a chair for him, and we proceeded to dine.

I have said each of the five or six stories of the mansion had two dwellings, consisting of several apartments. Phadrig Mhor had ransacked the whole place, and collected within our chamber such furniture and utensils as he could procure among the vacated and desolate rooms. From one he brought a table; from another, a high-backed antique chair; from a third, a stool; from a fourth, a tabourette; from another, a pot, a kettle, and so on, until he had almost furnished our damp chamber, which overlooked the row of poplars, beyond which, in the Platz, we saw a regiment of Scottish pikemen being drilled to the use of the pike, according to the new fashion, as laid down in the *Pallas Armata* of that eminent tactician, Captain Sir Thomas Kellie of Edinburgh and that ilk.

Our dinner dishes had been borrowed from the old house-keeper of Otto Roskilde; for knives each of us had his skene-dhu, and for cups each had his hunting-quagh or shell, hooped with silver; but Otto Roskilde brought his own pewter pot, which reminded me of a Lowlander's beechwood bicker. A saddle of mutton, which Phadrig had procured (Heaven alone knows how), with boiled Russian tongues, bread and cheese, composed a repast on which Fingal himself might have fared with satisfaction; and we brewed a brave tappit-hen in a gigantic Flemish jug,

with Dutch skeidam and hot water in equal proportions, sweetened with sugar from the Indian isles. Beside this, we had four bulbous-looking flasks of French brandy, which Phadrig had found when foraging about the rooms, and to the evident chagrin of our host, whose grey eyes glistened with surprise at the discovery, and anger at our henchman.

As neither M'Farquhar nor Phadrig Mhor (whom as his fosterer we always treated as an equal) could speak one word of any language but their native Gaëlic, nearly the whole conversation fell to the share of the lieutenant, M'Alpine, and myself. He spoke a little German, having served in the Low Countries under Sir James Ramsay, and I knew a little Spanish, having acquired it at King's College.

Now it chanced that both these languages were spoken by the Hausmeister, who, though at first somewhat reserved even to sullenness and silence, when his heart warmed by the contents of our gallant tankard, became loquacious in the extreme.

Though his name was Scandinavian enough in its sound, having imbibed certain undefinable suspicions about this man—awakened doubtless by the deep and secret smiles which I detected stealing over his sallow and swarthy face, like the quiet ripple on the surface of a Dutch canal—I found myself baffled in deciding to what country he belonged; for one moment there was something of the Danish softness in his voice, the next it had the deep twang of the Swedish, or the harsh growl of the German, and all these various tones were least discernible in his Spanish which he spoke with the greatest fluency.

Filling up his quagh to the brim, my cousin Ian, believing that we were in presence of a Holsteiner, stood up and drank courteously—

“To the honour of the brave and faithful Holsteiners.”

I translated this to Otto Roskilde, who thereupon stood up in his great calf-skin boots, and returned thanks with tolerable politeness; then we all drank to each other's healths again clinking our cups together, above, below, and side by side, in the old German fashion. The peg-tankard was refilled, and, as the afternoon subsided into evening, the evening into night, and the shadows of the Platz were thrown upon the stagnant canals, our good-fellowship increased; and we spoke openly of the chances of the war, and our hopes of beating the Imperialists back to the gates of Vienna. At this our Hausmeister shook his great curly head of black hair, assuring us that all the power of the North could never withstand the torrent which the Emperor Ferdinand was rolling against it.

“And which way do you march, sirs, on leaving Glückstadt he asked.

"We know not," replied M'Alpine.

"Towards the Weser, probably?" he continued, with a casual but inquisitive tone.

"That is as King Christian shall direct," said I.

"Your route *must* be towards the Weser; for all the Danes, Holsteiners, and Germans who follow Christian IV. have been marching in that direction since the battle of Lütter was won."

"I thought a Holsteiner would have said *lost*," observed M'Alpine.

"True!" replied Otto, with some confusion of manner, "for it was indeed lost to the princes of the Protestant confederation; but how many more of your brave countrymen are coming to join King Christian?"

"We know not," said I; "but if they come here as they are flocking to the standard of Gustavus Adolphus, like his, the army of Christian will be all Scots, I think, and nothing but Scots."

"And you know not how many more are expected?"

"You are very inquisitive," said I, laughing; "about nine thousand."

"All Scots?"

"All—Murkle's, Spynie's, and Nithsdale's regiments—each being a brigade."

"And of the English, how many?"

"We know nothing about the English," replied M'Alpine, imbibing somewhat of my distrust at these categorical queries; "nothing save that, when we sailed, Scotland expected a war with them about this new court called the Commission for Grievances, which King Charles is about to thrust upon us, and we consider to be only that devilish Star-chamber under another name."

"Then, are there no English coming?"

"One regiment of pikes," I replied briefly, "for they generally prefer the service of the Prince of Orange; but why are *you* so anxious for all this information, Herr Otto?"

The blood rushed into his sallow face, and he stammered—

"Is it strange that I, a Holsteiner, should be anxious to learn the number of our friends?"

"Oh! 'tis quite natural," said I, feeling the justice of his reply; "but now, Herr, since I have answered all your questions, will you please to answer a few of mine?"

"It will afford me the utmost gratification if I can do so," he rejoined, filling up his cup, and letting out another button of his doublet to make room for its contents. "On what matter can I give you information?"

"Who is that very attractive damoiselle that occupies one of the apartments below?"

"Damoiselle!" he reiterated, while the paleness of anger overspread his face in the twilight; "you are mistaken, young gentleman; there is—assuredly there is no young lady there."

"Come, Herr, rally your thoughts," I continued, with a loud laugh, as the liquor mounted to my brain; "you will be sure to remember her—fair and handsome, with the most beautiful dark hair, and the longest eyelashes in the world. I warrant that there is not a prettier *jung-frau* in all Holstein!"

"You mean *jung-frau*," replied Otto, with another of his queer but obnoxious smiles, and this time the fellow was laughing earnestly, for I had made—what I afterwards learned to be—a mistake; "but I beg to assure you, that no young damoiselle could be hereabout without my knowledge."

"I am aware of that," I continued in my tone of banter; "but, pray, make no more assertions; I have no wish to pry into your little secrets, Herr—not I, though doubtless this damoiselle is the prettiest little woman in Glückstadt."

"Were this St. John's night, when our fairies and white women are all abroad, I would swear thou hadst seen a Trolld; for there is no woman here but the old crone my housekeeper, to whom thou art welcome. There is none, I vow to you, by the soul of Holger Danske!"

Confounded by the earnestness of the man, struck by a sudden and ferocious gleam that passed over his glassy eyes, and supposing there was in the affair some strange mystery with which I had no right to meddle, I dropped the subject, and assisted to fill and refill the tankard; nor did we separate until the midnight moon was shining on the broad waters of the Elbe, and the strong round tower of Glückstadt.

Then Otto Roskilde retired, and the moment he was gone we rolled our tartan plaids around us, and lay down on the hard boarded floor, with our targets and claymores for pillows.

CHAPTER VIII.

OUR CANTONMENT.

THE next day's sun rose bright and radiant; the birds sang in the green poplars; the storks screamed on the red gable-tops; the great frogs were croaking hoarsely among the bronze-like alime which was generated on the bosom of the stagnant canals; and the business of life commenced in Glückstadt.

"I'll find her out," I muttered, as we sat down to breakfast on the remains of our supper, together with a can of Dantzic beer, a ham and basket of eggs, which our invaluable Phadrig had procured from some confiding sutler in the Platz; "I will find her out, if she is between the roof-tree and the ground-stone!"

"Who?" asked Ian, overhearing my Gaelic.

"A fair young lady, whom I discovered yesterday."

"Dioul! we have been but one night in this land of Holstein, and this inflammatory student hath fallen in love!" replied Ian, laughing aloud, for he thought I was jesting. "How these petticoats influence the fate and the fancies of men!"

"And where does this fair dame dwell?" said Angus.

"Below us; did you not hear me speaking about her to the *hutsbode*, Hausmeister, or whatever yonder august man in boots considers himself."

"How could we? you spoke in Dutch."

"Or Spanish, or some such gibberish, known only to yourselves," said Ian, slicing down the ham with his dirk.

"Below us, too," continued Angus Roy; "that is good! Why, Phadrig Mhor and I investigated the whole place when we came in yesterday, and saw no woman but that delectable old house-keeper, with her linen coif and wrinkled visage. Depend upon it, there is no lady here!"

"You are as bad as that sullen dog, the Herr; for I assure you there is a woman—a lady—a very pretty one, too! Pass the beer-can, Angus, please."

"'Tis a fairy," said the sergeant, Mhor, breaking his sixth egg.

"She is fair as the daughter of the snow—that love of Fingal, of whom I have heard you sing a hundred times, Phadrig," said I.

"Here, in this desolate house?"

"Below us, Ian, as I have said, in a magnificent chamber, too."

"Come, now," replied Ian, "he is jesting with us all; this is some quip he has picked up at college. Look at us again, cousin Philip; have our ears grown, since we marched in yesterday?"

"Cousin Ian, I never was more serious in my life."

"Why, you might as well tell us there was snow last night, as that this beautiful lady and stately apartment are in this mansion, when we searched every nook and corner of it for food, fuel, and furniture, and the sergeant thrust his Lochaber axe into every hole we could not enter ourselves. And pretty, you say?"

"Actually beautiful! a dazzling skin—dark hair—an adorable figure—the air of a countess."

"What a diamond," exclaimed Angus Roy, shaking back the

thick red hair which gained him that sobriquet—"what a love of a little woman she must be! By the grey stone of M'Gregor, I would give my best brooch to see her! However," he continued, pouring some skeidam into his silver-hooped hunting quaigh, "I drink to her health."

"A fairy's health?" said Ian.

"Nay, to the countess thou knowest about, Philip;" and then the whole three laughed loudly, like frank hearty mountaineers, as they were.

"Beware of snares, Philip," said Ian, as he adjusted his graceful plaid with the brooch of Moina Rose; "as for me, I would not give my brown-eyed Highland maid for all the dames of Almaynie—by St. Colm of the Isles, I would not!" and, as he buckled on his sword, the light-hearted young chief began to sing an old Gaëlic song—

*"Gu ma slàn a chà mì,
Mo chàillín dileas donn;
Air 'n d' fhas an cualan reidh,
'S air an deise dh'èireadh fonn.*

"How happy could I be with thee,
My bonnie brown-eyed maid!
In thy loveliness and beauty,
With innocence array'd.

*"Se cainnt do bheoll tu dh'èinne leam,
'Nuair bhiodh mintinn trom;
'Stu thogadh suas mo chridhe
'Nuair bhiodh tu bruidhinn reùm.*

"Thy voice to me was music
When my poor heart was sad;
With thee, how fled the fleet hours,
Conversing in the shade!"

Breakfast being over, we took our swords and bonnets, and sallied forth to the sunny Platz, where the regiment was parading under the colours to commence the course of drill, and training to march and countermarch by files, sections, and companies. As to the handling of arms, our clansmen had known that since their childhood; for they were all men of that glorious old race, whose first food in infancy was received from the point of their father's sword; and who were reared like the Spartans of old by their Highland mothers, whose prayers were ever that their warlike sons might have the grace to die—not on their beds, like sloths or hounds, but on the field of battle, with their shields below and their plaids above them. Thus were the Scottish clansmen reared in arms, and trained to war and daring; and we cannot wonder at finding the Highland brigades of

Christian IV., and of Gustavus Adolphus, the terror of the Poles, the Muscovites, and the Imperialists.

"Now, cousin Philip," said Ian, as we descended the great staircase of the mansion, "show us the bower of your invisible countess."

Undeterred by their jesting, I examined all the doors of the empty flats below our billet, but found no trace of the one I looked for. Every chamber appeared to have been long deserted; the walls were damp; the dust lay on the floors; there was rust on the andirons and grates, and spiders had spun their webs across the small thick panes of the windows. Though completely silenced by the disappearance of the chamber, and by the consequent jests, laughter, and disbelief of my friends, I was not the less convinced that there lurked some strange mystery in the lady's concealment, and the Hausmeister's connivance thereat.

This mystery I secretly resolved to probe and unravel. It was doubtless a very impertinent determination; but there was less heard then on my chin than now: besides, I was very heedless and rash.

I applied my powers of persuasion to the old housekeeper; but she was deaf as a cannon, shook her paralytic head, determined not to understand me, and pouched with true German avidity a gold Scottish noble, or a twelve-shilling piece, which I gave her in mistake for a dog-dollar.

The old pile of building became invested with an interest which otherwise it would never have possessed. My friends, who frequently discovered me searching for the lost chamber, laughed at me for a time without mercy; and none entered more into their spirit of raillery than Otto Roskilde, who swore that it was a spirit I had seen, a Danish Trolld from Juteland—a spirit of the Elbe—a white woman from the forests of Bremen—or a Trolld, and nothing but a Trolld!

Rather provoked by all this, I frequently ascended and descended the staircase alone; examined all the doors, and tapped on the walls of the desolate rooms; listened for a sound, but heard none save the guttural voices of the people in the Platz, the croaking of the frogs in the canal, or the hoarser croak of Roskilde's old timber-toned housekeeper, dame Krumpel, singing a monotonous ditty of Holstein to the *birr* of her spinning wheel. My beauty was certainly not in the apartments of her master; he had but two, and I had taken the liberty of examining them both, twenty times. Having been educated at the College of James IV., and moreover been a residenter in "the brave city" of Aberdeen for so many years, I considered myself more than usually acute; but I was now forced to confess that, with all the knowledge of the world I had gathered at the London of the

North, in this affair of "my countess" (as Ian and Angus named her) I was completely baffled.

At Glückstadt on the Elbe we lay in quarters for some time, during which we improved in all points of discipline, according to the rules of war then practised by all noble cavaliers of the Scottish nation, who had first carried them into the armies of northern Europe.

By speaking our pure old Lowland language, I found little or no difficulty in making myself understood by the Danish officers, and by the brave and honest Holsteiners, whose peculiar dialect of the German I soon acquired.

Our pay was poor. A captain had about £130 per annum, and mine, as ensign of musketeers, was only a slet-dollar per day, out of which I had to furnish myself with wine and beer; but we had come to fight for honour and glory, not for the base lucre or copper *skillings*—for Elizabeth Stuart, and her uncle, the brave King Christian—for the liberties of Germany and the freedom of the Protestant religion—for, *Vivat!* we were all true Scottish cavaliers. Yet there were many among us who, when the season became moist and the marsh fevers thinned our ranks, grumbled sorely, and openly averred we would have been better at home, fighting our own neighbours, the English, than gasping among the frowy fogs of Holstein.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MYSTERIOUS DOOR;—A DISCOURSE ON NYMPHS.

On the 6th day after our landing, Ian and his sergeant, Phadrig Mhor, with sixty of our pikemen, were on guard in the great tower at the harbour mouth. After spending the forenoon in lounging with them on the ramparts of their post, from whence we had an extensive view of the flat and fertile country, with its houses of bright red brick roofed with yellow straw, and sheltered by rows of tall elms and taper poplars; after explaining to them, in Gaëlic, some chapters of a treatise on fortification by Errard of Bois-le-Duc—for we had all resolved to become perfect soldiers; after a few glasses of wine with them at a tavern close by the guardhouse, and having some lively good-for-nothing chatter with the pretty jungfers, or waitresses, whose plump round figures, in their short petticoats and spotless white vests, made them as charming and piquant as the soubrettes or grisettes of Paris, I returned slowly to our billet, passing through the evening crowds in the Platz, with my bonnet cocked smartly on my side, my plaid waving behind me, and my claymore under my arm, feeling very much satisfied with my own appearance,

and proud that I belonged to a regiment whose fifteen hundred pair of sturdy bare legs were the admiration of all the women in Glückstadt.

I entered the vast and silent house of Otto Roskilde, and was ascending the stair, with my head full of ravelins and breast-works, pretty ankles and counterscarps, waitresses and fortifications, flying sap and salient angles, when a sound struck my ear; I suddenly paused—drew breath, and listened.

The notes of a guitar and of a clear female voice, sweetly modulated, made my heart beat like lightning; for a guitar was in the apartment of that sleeping beauty, whom I had nearly forgotten.

I approached softly; the door of the same apartment I had formerly seen was standing partly open, and I again saw the same fair young girl, who had been asleep on the sofa, running her fingers over a beautiful guitar, to which she was softly singing a lively Spanish song. Her back was towards me, and her neck and shoulders (where visible between her thick lace veil and high Spanish ruff) were dazzlingly white. I could distinctly see her face, which was reflected in an opposite mirror. Her hair was dressed loftily over a high pearl-studded comb, after the fashion of her countrywomen; she had bright lively eyes, the most wicked smile, and the finest teeth, in the world. The little coquette seemed to be studying smiles and positions in the mirror, and, as she did so, a little dimple appeared in each of her cheeks, which were pale, or exhibited the faintest tinge of red—altogether unlike the full blushing cheeks of the German maids of Holstein. Then, as she sang, her voice rang clearly and beautifully as a little silver bell. It was a Tonadilla, from a play of the old dramatist, Lopez de Vega; but from which of them Heaven only knows; for old Lopez wrote such an incredible number, that I do not believe he would have recognised it himself.

“Gentil Donna, gentil donna—
Gentil donna, goddess bright!
Fairer than the morning light!
How long shall I be doom'd to feel
The wound thy hand alone can heal?
Gentil donna, gentil donna—
Gentil donna, to me give
The hope from this dear wound to live.
Gentil donna—see, the dart
Of love has pierced my bleeding heart.”

“Caballero, caballero,
Caballero, hence away,
Lest I laugh at what you say:
Caballero——”

Suddenly, in the mirror's polished depth, her eye caught a glimpse of my reflected figure, with its shining cuirass and dark green tartans. The guitar dropped from her hand, and she turned towards me with a pale and startled expression. It was now my turn to be confused, for I had no business there.

"Pardon me, señora," said I, in my most dulcet Spanish, for I had perceived at once that she was a Spaniard; "I have mistaken the way to my own apartment, and—and——"

She appeared to rally her spirits, and bowed.

"This old house," I continued, advancing one pace, "with its long wooden stairs, its dark passages, so full of doors to the right and to the left—you understand me, señora?"

"Oh yes! señor—I think I do."

"Its wainscoted galleries and ambulatories," I continued, advancing another pace, "are quite perplexing, and I feel that I am an awkward intruder."

"You look, señor, just like one dropped from the moon," said she with a smile, as she resumed her guitar with its broad blue ribbon; "but I have the honour to wish you a good day——"

"And you pardon my intrusion?"

"Pardon—oh yes! but, in ascending the stair, keep always to the right, remember. I cannot be angry with so gallant a cavalier" (*galante caballero*).

There was a wicked smile on her lips; but my heart beat quick, and I remained gazing upon her, fascinated by the expression of her eyes.

Those beautiful orbs attracted me more than the curved brows, the straight nose, the fine nostril and short upper lip, their accessories. They were somewhat of a blue black, or violet colour, and sparkled under long fringes of silk, which chastened and subdued the fire of their expression. They were full of obscure language, of inspiration, and undefined thoughts, those beautiful eyes! They were full of sweetness, too, and of power: I could imagine that their expression would have been magnificent in love, and terrible in rage; but at that moment they expressed only the most charming archness and timidity.

"Come, señor—are you going?" said she.

"Certainly, señora," said I, with confusion; "but permit me to kiss your hand, in token that you really forgive me."

"There, señor—and now gone; for, on my honour, you tire me."

I kissed her pretty hand with all the confusion of a boy, and hurried away. Such was my flutter, and such my tumult, that I omitted to mark well the features of the passage, that I might find my way back again.

Only those timid, dark, and seducing eyes!

I sprang up-stairs to our apartment, in search of any of my friends.

"Hollo, Angus M'Alpine!" cried I.

"Dia! what is the matter?" cried the tall lieutenant of our company, as he sprang from a table where he was playing at chess with the Hausmeister, and in doing so overset the board and their wine-pot together; "is the house on fire?"

"No! but I have found her."

"Her—who?" he asked, while the Hausmeister changed colour very perceptibly.

"I have seen her again."

"What, thy countess?" said Red Angus, laughing.

"Yes—and spoken with her."

"I wish you had tarried with her; for you have spilled our wine, and spoiled our game."

"It is all an illusion—an impossibility," said Herr Roskilde; "for I swear to you, gentlemen, there is no such person——"

"Hold, Rollo," said M'Alpine, gravely, on perceiving that I was getting wroth; "perhaps there is something supernatural in all this."

"Nothing supernatural at all, Angus. I spoke with her—saw her, and kissed her hand."

"Oho! Mahoud! thou art getting on apace," said the lieutenant, laughing.

"Beware!" growled Otto in his deep German base, "for these Trolde are mere unsubstantial forms; hollow behind——"

"Trolde be hanged!" said I; "hollow behind, indeed! Do you laugh at me, friend Otto?"

"No—but I say, that I think you have been deceived."

"Nay, may I die if I ever touched a hand more fair, more round, more beautiful! And then her eyes! Ah, Master Otto! 'tis for yourself you keep this fair prize so sily locked up—but you cannot deceive me. Come with me, gentlemen, and I will show you whether or not I have been deceived by the Herr or my own eyes, and whether I have deserved the jests of Ian for the last week."

Angus took his sword in case of accidents; we all descended the stair, and I confidently led the way to the lower landing-place, turned to the right, and advanced along the passage. Passing several doors, I paused; for, lo! that one which led to the chamber of my Spaniard had vanished again. I was perplexed—thunderstruck; while both M'Alpine and the German laughed immoderately. I felt conscious that I looked exceedingly foolish, but knew not what to say. Gaping about me, I felt all the walls, and sounded them with the pommel of my poniard; I listened for the tinkle of the guitar, and bell-like notes of th soft warbling voice, but all was still as the grave.

"'Tis the work of the devil!" said I.

"Then you agree with me at last, Herr Ensign?" said Otto.

"You have been at the wine-house, Philip," added M'Alpine, "and the memory of some red and rosy jungfer has been haunting you."

"Beware, young man!" continued the Hausmeister, with a dark and most inexplicable look; "it may be a wile of the evil one, or perhaps of Holger Danske, to bear you away. She may be one of the Elle people, whose touch is bewitching, and whose breath produces pestilence and sickness. They dwell among the sedges of the canals, and the moors of Juteland; but there are times when they venture to enter cities."

"Have the Elle women beautiful eyes?"

"They are fair and winning in aspect, but are a mere appearance, being hollow like a dough trough. They excel in playing upon stringed instruments, the notes of which are enchanting; and young men like you, Herr Ensign, find the utmost difficulty in resisting their fascinations. They are most frequently to be met with in the moonlight nights, dancing among the long soft grass, or in summer evenings under the shadow of trees, to the music made by grotesque gnomes, who play on enormous fiddles; and no young man whom they meet, ever experiences a cold reception or denial of anything. You hear me, Herr?"

"By the soul of King Alpine!" said Angus, "they are just like our Daoine-shie at home! For God's sake and your own, Philip Rollo, beware, or we may find a bunch of reeds, or a bundle of rotten sticks, in your place some morning when the drum beats. Then how would it sound for the sergeant-major to report to Sir Donald, that Ensign Rollo had been carried off by the fairies?"

"I have heard old Dominie Daidle expatiate on the Lamiaæ of the early Greeks—evil demons, who assumed the forms of beautiful nymphs, and enticed young men——"

"Especially ensigns," suggested Angus.

"Into lonely places, where they devoured them."

"Bones and all—oh Lord!" said Angus.

"Well, Herr," continued Otto Roskilde, "such are our Elle women in Denmark and Holstein, and such may be the fair spirit you have seen; so I would beseech you to be wary."

Honest M'Alpine half believed him; but I observed there was a ray of secret mirth twinkling under the glassy surface of this man's grey, deceitful eyes; I felt certain that he was *jewing* me, but resolved to "bide my time."

Book the Second.

CHAPTER X.

THE FULL EFFECT OF A SPANISH PETTICOAT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the rampant Calvinism of the duchy, the Lords of Holstein—for the province has a nobility of its own, and a most important, bulbous-looking nobility they are—had established a theatre near the market-place; and on this night there was to be a performance, as several large red and yellow bills, posted on the corners of the Platz and porch of the great church, informed those who could read them. Accompanied by M'Alpine and Ian, who had never witnessed anything of the kind before, and who stole away for an hour or so from his guard at the Round Tower, I bent my steps towards the place. We paid a rixdollar for one of the best seats, and found ourselves lodged completely to our satisfaction.

I had heard old people speak much of the theatrical representations made at Aberdeen in 1603, by one William Shakespear (whose dramas are becoming popular among his countrymen) and other English players, who had been sent by Elizabeth, their queen, to perform before his majesty King James VI. of wise memory, and his good subjects of "the brave city," to the great scandal and indignation of the Calvinist clergy, who abhorred all such matters as trumpery, that savoured too much of the popish mysteries of the past age. I had seen one or two representations on the Schoolhill (when I was at College), which forcibly reminded me of the remarks of that gallant soldier, Cervantes, when writing of Lopez de Rueda; "until whose time," says he, "we were not acquainted with all the machinery now necessary, nor with the challenges given by the Moors to the Christians, and which are now so common. We saw no figures rise from underground, nor cloud-borne angels come to visit us; the simple ornament of the theatre was an old curtain, *behind which* certain minstrels and musicians performed an old romance." Thus had I seen, or rather heard, the plays of Davie Lindsay in open daylight, and I must confess to being in no way prepared for the brilliancy of the spectacle which burst upon us when entering the theatre of Christian IV. at Glückstadt; and as for my cousin Ian, being but a plain Highland gentleman, wholly unaccustomed to cities and their splendours, reared in

the voiceless solitude of a wooded glen, he was for a time struck dumb.

The large hall of an old-fashioned house, the three wooden gables of which were propped on columns of oak, and overhung the Platz, had been recently fitted up for the occasion, and for the first time in Holstein a famous dancer was to make her *début*.

Across the upper end, as on a dais, the stage was erected, and curtained off from the main body of the hall; before it sat the members of the orchestra, and behind them were the people of the town, seated in close rows on wooden benches. Along the sides were balconies hung with crimson cloth, emblazoned with the arms of all the princes of the Protestant League, and lighted by oil lamps of warmly-coloured glass, for the accommodation of the pompous burgomaster and grandees of the city. The stage, which was surmounted by the arms of the duchy, and the *triple helmet*, was profusely gilded, and brilliantly illuminated by rows of wax candles, having reflectors, which threw a blaze of light upon a blue curtain, leaving the audience comparatively in the shade.

We were all attention, and as we occupied the most prominent stall next to those of the burgomaster and Sir David Drummond, governor of the town, we had a good opportunity of observing the citizens as they crowded into their places. This species of entertainment was almost new in Glückstadt; thus, as the expectation and excitement were great, the theatre was soon filled, and in the most prominent part of the pit I observed our Hausmeister, with his bombasted breeches, high ruff, and great basket-hilted espadone, and with a Dutch pipe in his mouth, like most of the men around him, enveloping himself in a cloud of smoke, which soon concealed him from the indignant glances of the blooming female audience. These were dames whose gay dresses made the area appear like a parterre of flowers; and I observed that they were generally softly featured, and brightly complexioned—the young wearing their fair hair dressed over high combs of fretted silver or gold, after the ancient fashion of Holstein; while the old and the married wore large linen coifs, like those of our Lowland women at home.

Many of our Scottish cavaliers, in their bright corsets and laced doublets, with their high ruffs and white scarfs, and a few of the counts and barons of the swampy neighbourhood, were in the balconies; and some of the wild-looking clansmen of my own valiant regiment, in their tartan plaids and buff coats, were scattered here and there, gazing with active-eyed wonder from among the mass of stolid-visaged Holsteiners, some of whom
ats and ruffs, in fashion a hundred years old. The

people waxed impatient, and the clatter of heavy swords and spurred boots on the floor announced it from time to time, though the orchestra endeavoured to soothe them by performing a piece of music with their fiddles, viols, sacbuts, shalms, and flutes.

I was just wondering who a very pretty damsel, in a brocaded boddice and low-bosomed ruff, might be, when Ian exclaimed—

“Ece! behold!” and I turned towards the stage.

The blue curtain had suddenly vanished, and a beautiful scene was disclosed.

It was a bright shore, beyond which lay a brighter sea, whereon an orient sun was shining; rocks lay in the foreground, with light green vines overhanging them, and many a heavy cluster of the purple grape. On one side lay the ruin of a temple; on the other, an ancient fountain poured forth its sparkling current from a Triton's shell into a marble basin, which, without overflowing, seemed to receive the whole current of that living water. Afar off, the capes and promontories of that fairy land seemed to be sleeping in the glorious sunlight, vanishing away into the summer haze exhaled from an azure sea; and so real seemed the whole, that I am sure our wild Mackays and fierce M'Farquhars in the seats below, as they crossed themselves under their belted plaids, and muttered to each other under their thick mustaches, thought it was all reality, or framed by the spells of the Daoine-shie.

Anon the musicians struck up a Spanish dance, the sound of castanets was heard, then, like a dazzling vision, a light and beautiful girl appeared before us. Whether she was a human being or a fairy, it seemed for a moment difficult to decide; until recollection—quick as the flash of a cannon—came upon me, and I recognised my mysterious beauty, and gazed upon her, wonderstruck and speechless.

Her native charms, which were very great, were enhanced to the utmost by the elegance of her costume, which reached scarcely below the knee, and had innumerable little red and black flounces. Her boddice and stockings were of scarlet—the former was low-bosomed, and revealed the beautiful contour of her form; her arms were bare, round and white as snow; but how shall I describe the smallness of her feet and hands, for every way this being seemed perfect? The luxuriance of her glossy hair was braided into a coronet, and amid its darkness shone a row of pearl pins, from each of which depended a little golden ball. Her smiles seemed full of love and fascination; and her dark and glorious eyes were full of joy and ecstasy.

In the lightness of her movements she seemed to float upon that flood of melody, which filled the whole theatre, and made

all our hearts swell and leap, we knew not why. Mine was full of new and delightful sensations—my voice was gone—I had only eyes. While beating time with her castanets, the beautiful Spaniard turned, whirled, and bounded with the lightness of a spirit, at every pirouette making her whole muslin dress stand out in a circle around her waist; thus my eyes wandered in astonishment from her finely-formed ankles to her snowy arms, from her white shoulders to her braided hair, her smiling face, and flashing eyes.

Young, inexperienced, and susceptible, having but lately left my native land, where no such exhibition would have been tolerated for a moment, under penalty of the iron jongs and cutty-stool, I was borne, as it were, away from myself; my whole soul was riveted on the graceful motions of this dazzling dancer, who seemed to move amid a sea of light and harmony, nor did I rally until a roar of applause shook the rafters of the theatre.

"How she pirouettes!" said an old countess in the balcony near us; "oh, the light flounces—the pretty feet!"

"The devil! she is quite enchanting! beautiful—beautiful! such ankles!" said a major of Reitres.

"She dances like a fairy, a Troid, an Elle woman!" said the burgomaster's wife.

"Or like the Lady Margarete of Skofgaard, who danced twelve knights to death!" added the burgomaster, Dubbelsteirn.

"Herr Baron," said I to Baron Karl of Klosterfiord, a captain of Danish pistoliers, when the blue curtain had fallen, and the lady retired, "how is this fair damsel named?"

"We only know her as the Señora Prudentia Bandolo."

"What a charming name for a woman so pretty!" said a cavalier in crimson and gold lace, who accompanied the baron, and whom I recognised to be a Sleswiger.

"Where does she live?" I asked carelessly.

"I would give my best horse to know," replied the cavalier, laughing.

The baron gave an expressive cough, and said—

"You would not be half so foolish, Fritz."

"But she involves herself in a cloud of mystery," replied Fritz, who was major of the Sleswig musketeers; "and the fact is, she is a charming little darling, and would look very well riding at the head of our regiment."

"Beside the chaplain, eh? Your staff would then be complete, Fritz," replied the baron, laughing, and curling up his fair mustaches. "Under protection of the truce between King Christian and the Emperor," he added, turning to me, "she has only come to Glückstadt until the troops march towards the Weser; and, as she will dance here a hundred dollars into her purse every night

she may form a pretty prize for a foraging party, when we approach the frontiers of the empire."

"Then we musketeers of Sleswig may have her, after all!" yawned Fritz, as he polished his cuirass with his gauntlet; "do you know, Karl, that since she has been here among us, she actually pretends to have turned Protestant?"

"Pretends!" I reiterated, shocked at the manner in which these rough soldiers spoke of a being so beautiful; "surely you mistake, for I think there is a great appearance of sincerity about her. I would say all was candour, and there was no concealment."

"Do you judge by the fascination of her smile, or the scantiness of yonder Spanish petticoat?" said the major, Fritz, still polishing his cuirass.

"I judge by her face; its expression is quite artless—she really does not seem to be aware of her own charms."

"The devil! thou art quite smitten!" said the captain of pistoliers, with a boisterous laugh. "That idea amuses me extremely; I would give my best helmet to see a woman who was so little aware of her own beauty that she required to be told of it. I assure you, sir, that these pretty creatures are quite as artificial as their scenery."

The Sleswig cavalier pulled up his high ruff to conceal how he smiled; and, though I felt indignant at their severe remarks on the actress, there was such a frank, pleasant, and soldierly air about them both, that I could not quarrel with them. They were much alike, having both the same devil-may-care aspect; having mustaches shorn off at the corners of their mouths, with broad foreheads and bold restless eyes; over his right temple the pistolier had a sword-cut, which was scarcely healed. After a pause—

"I say, Fritz," said he; "have you, who are an enterprising genius, actually never discovered where this girl lives?"

"How can I with certainty? No one knows anything about where she lives—save that she does not live at home." There was a flourish of music.

"Ece! the curtain rises again!" said M'Alpine, waving his bonnet; "and again all eyes turn towards her, like flowers towards the sun."

My goddess was again upon the stage, but in a very different dress. The scene disclosed was a far-stretching valley between beautiful mountains: over one of these rose the pale light of the moon, on the other died away the last glow of the west; the calm current of a starlit river wound between the shaded hills, and the lofty arches of a ruined bridge spanned it; their downward shadows were reflected deep in the stream below. The white columns of a ruined temple, such as might have stood in

Lybian deserts, arose on one side; on the other stood the red square keep of a guarded fortress, and dark Italian pine-woods threw their gloom around them. The white-orbed moon soared slowly into the blue sky, which became studded by innumerable stars; it edged the ruins, the rocks, the leaves, and the ripples of the stream below with a silvery wavering light; and, lo! there seemed to be nothing but objects of nature standing palpably before us.

Clad in long and graceful drapery which was white as snow, girdled by a glittering zone or bandelet below her rounded bosom, with her arms bare to those dazzling shoulders, on which her long hair rolled unbound, with a lyre in her hand, and a bright star sparkling on her radiant brow, Prudentia, as the Genius of Poetry, arose from the ruin of a fallen column, around which the leaves of the ivy, the vine, and acanthus were clustering, and came forward greeted by a storm of applause. I know not whether it was the style of her dress, or the subdued light around her; but she seemed paler, and if possible more beautiful, than before.

The play was a tragedy, which I now remember not, neither have I any recollection of the other characters; for all my ideas were absorbed by the fair Spanish *figurante*, who now made her appearance as a singer, and after a short prelude on her lyre, the notes of which seemed to come from the orchestra, she began to warble, with all the sweetness of a little bird, a Spanish song, and it seemed to be somewhat like the serenade I had overheard her practising; and, however absurd it might seem for a maid of Magna Græcia to sing in the language of Old Castile, it served the honest Holsteiners quite as well as the purest Greek that was spoken in the days of Pythagoras.

If I was entranced while this siren sung, I was equally delighted by her acting. My heart beat like lightning; but I had one source of disappointment—she never once turned her dark eyes towards me, nor seemed to observe me, although the balcony occupied by M'Alpine, the two other cavaliers, and myself, was made sufficiently conspicuous by the richness of our dresses. I detected, however, one bright glance of recognition thrown among the closely-packed masses of the pit; I followed the smiling glance, and discovered the round bullet-head and grey glistening eyes of our Hausmeister.

Remembering the stuff he had so recently told me, about Trolchs and fairies, and women who were hollow behind, I was making mental resolutions to punch a hole or two in his doublet, when the sudden descent of the curtain, and rapid extinction of half the lights, broke the spell of the place; but the voice of Prudentia still seemed to linger in my ear, as, in closing the epilogue, she sang the last verses of Lopez de Vega.

"Will she appear again to-night, Herr Baron?" I asked the captain of the pistoliers.

"No, thank Heaven!" said he, yawning; "the drama is over."

"And I am tired to death," added Fritz, wrapping his mantle about him; "why, Herr Ensign, you do not mean to say you could endure another hour of this?"

I neither waited to see their covert smiles, nor bid them adieu, but avoided Ian and M'Alpine by mingling with the crowd, and hurried away, that I might see Prudentia as she left the theatre, or at least contrive to intercept her as she entered that mysterious house which seemed to be our common residence.

After the glare and heat of the theatre for so many hours, the moonlit street seemed by contrast to be dark and cold. I rolled my plaid about me, and, in the shadow of a projecting doorway, stood watching at the corner of the Platz: still and sluggish as a stream of ink, the canal lay on one hand; the dark and dirty street, through which the crowd was dispersing, opened on the other. The storks were making uncouth sounds on the gables overhead, and before me stood our tall mansion, the door of which (after my two friends had entered) was unclosed no more; and I watched in vain till the Laird of Craigie's drums began to beat *reveille*, and I heard the shrill fifes pouring the old Lowland air to the morning wind—

"Could an' raw the wind does blaw;

Oh, sirs! it's winter fairly:

But though the hills be owre wi snaw,

We maun up in the mornin' early!"

Every person in Glückstadt had long since retired to their homes, but I saw nothing of my charming actress, and remembered the remarkable observation of Major Fritz—that she lived everywhere but at *home*.

I thought of Herr Roskilde, who seemingly had not returned either, and my mind began to exchange its obstinacy for anger and jealousy. Grey morning stole along the waveless waters of the Elbe; the quaint houses threw their heavy shadows against each other; and the stars, which had been shining in the puddles of the unpaved streets, disappeared. The kites, the crows, and other ravenous birds, which, with the storks, formed *then* the only scavengers in Glückstadt, were all busy burying their long bills among the heaps of mud and other *débris* of the silent streets, before it occurred to me that I looked very like a fool or a housebreaker, to be shivering there at such an untimely hour.

With this pleasant conviction I returned to my quarters, cold and weary, vexed and sleepy.

On ascending the stair, I saw the broad hat, the brown cloak, and espadone of Herr Otto, hanging as usual on three pegs at

the first landing-place; and, on pausing there for a moment, I heard him snoring as he did every night, like a sow-gelder winding his horn.

"Zounds!" said I, as I lay down to sleep completely mystified; "for one moment I have never taken my eyes from that door; none have entered but Ian and Angus Roy, and here is our Hausmeister, whom I left at the theatre, snorting comfortably in his own bed!"

CHAPTER XI.

MY FIRST GUARD.

IN my dreams she danced again before me, and her voice was lingering in my ear. I could still see that fairy figure, with the star beaming on her brow, the robe of muslin, the glancing ankles and shoulders, and hear the notes of that modulated voice, whose accents were like the tinkle of fairy bells. At twenty years of age, one only requires a day or two to fall (as one supposes) completely in love:—I was only twenty; the object of my secret adoration was beautiful, and I had seen her surrounded by all those accessories that will enhance beauty to the utmost extent. As a student, I had no time to fall in love; as a soldier, it seemed to be quite a matter of course—for I remembered the great Spanish novelist, who asserted that a soldier without a mistress was like a ship without a compass.

The moment I was out of bed and dressed, I instituted another search for her chamber door.

"The very devil is in it!" said I, for none was visible.

I was not so far gone in love as to lose my appetite; I made a hearty breakfast with my friends, put on my headpiece, corslet, kilt, and sword, and sallied forth to our place of arms.

I was for guard that day, and marched with fifty musketeers of our regiment to relieve my cousin Ian at the old round tower and gate of Glückstadt, which adjoined it.

We approached the post with a pipe playing, our arms carried, and matches lighted. Ian drew out his guard in line to receive us; his piper, in reply to ours, played the *Mackay's Salute*; then arms were presented, and the posts delivered over.

"Now, Philip," said Ian, before he marched off the old guard, "I have received from the governor, Sir David Drummond, in person, the most strict orders to examine all persons who pass or repass this barrier; and these orders I was to deliver to you, who must in turn repeat them to your successor. It would seem that there are spies in the city, who communicate with the

Imperialists. Two days after our landing here, our arrival and our strength were both known to the generals of the Empire; hence it is believed that Count Tilly will leave no means untried to cut us off on our march to join the king."

"Indeed!"

"Yes—as Sinclair's clan-regiment was cut to pieces among the Norwegian Alps; so look well to it, Philip Rollo, and see that none pass this gate without a written order from Sir David Drummond."

"And what of the burgomaster?"

"Dioul! the burgomaster Dubbelsteirn is under the baton just now. When a drum beats, the voice of law is dumb," replied Ian, throwing his plaid over his shoulders.

"You will return, Ian, and share my dinner?" said I.

"And why came you not to share mine yesterday? But I need scarcely ask. Doubtless you were searching all day for that imaginary door, which leads to where the spirit lives."

"Spirit?"

"The Troid—did not that fat Holsteiner tell us it was a fairy?"

"The Holsteiner is a lying poltroon," said I, with sudden passion, "and I will trouble you to tell him that I said so; and, moreover, that I mean to run him through the body if he will afford me a proper opportunity."

Ian left me, laughing, and for some hours I sauntered dreamily on the gun platform of the tower, watching the gaudily-painted and peculiarly-built ships of the Lübeckers, the Hamburgers, and others who frequented the port, and were pouring in grain, beef, powder, and stores of every kind, for the use of that strong army which King Christian hoped to lead into central Germany. Among the foreign shipping were several bearing the blue Scottish ensign of St. Andrew, and others which displayed the white flag of England.

This guard being my first, I was of course extremely zealous; I posted all the sentinels, and in person heard them deliver over their orders to each other, being resolved that, so far as I was concerned, no suspicious or unauthorised person should leave the gates of Glückstadt. As none of my sentinels could speak any language but their native Gaëlic, and persons requesting ingress and egress were brought before me every five minutes, the time was not permitted to hang heavily on my hands.

A tall figure, in the mountain garb, with a feather in his bonnet, and his belted plaid waving behind, with the tassels of his sporran and the hilt of his claymore sparkling in the sunshine, came along the ramparts, under the trees which overshadowed them, and cast also a comparative gloom on the yellow bosom of

the turgid and barge-encumbered canal which lay below. Long before the Highlander had reached the steps of the wooden tower, and sprung up the platform, I recognised my handsome cousin, the chief and most stately gentleman of the great clan Chattan.

"So you have seen *her* again?" said he.

"Who told you so, Ian?" I asked.

"Red Angus M'Alpine, who was with us at the tragedy last night."

"I never told Angus that I recognised my unknown in the fair Spanish dancer."

"Angus, the best huntsman between Strathalladale and Strathearn, is not so blind as a bat; and, like many smart persons in this world, can see things without being told of them. He said that you seemed to see nothing but her figure, and to hear nothing but her voice; to be all ear and eye—to devour every motion, and that you were a lost man. 'A lost man! Angus Roy,' said I; 'tuts! think you my cousin, Rollo of the Craig, will forget that he is a gentleman of birth and coat-armour, and that she is but a Spanish posture-maker, who exhibits her painted limbs at so much per night to all the boors of Glückstadt? A pretty wife she would make to take home to Cromartie Firth, and to the old tower of Craigrollo! I wonder if the old spoon of Sir Ringan would suit her dainty mouth!' And so you see, Philip, I quite laughed Angus out of the notion."

I felt that Ian was laughing a little at *me*, too; and the quick blood which had suffused my face while he was rallying me, announced that his suspicions were well founded, and that, if I was not fairly in love with the beautiful *danzador*, I was very near it.

"Take care, Philip," said Ian, whose keen Highland eyes had been regarding me with a half smile under his bonnet; "and beware, for there must be something shameful about her."

"Shameful!" I reiterated, shocked at a word so disrespectful; "shameful, Ian!"

"Immoral, then—which you will," continued Ian Dhu a little doggedly, "or why the d—l does your damsel conceal herself so closely? I do not half like that beetle-browed fellow, Roskilde, either."

"I dislike him wholly, and distrust him, too."

"He has some bad reason for concealing her, depend upon it; but then, cousin Philip, you know 'tis no business of *ours*."

"No—no—of course not," said I, coughing, to conceal the annoyance I felt at the idea of there being a *liaison* between my beautiful Spaniard and that hideous Holsteiner in the bombasted reeches and calfskin boots.

"Ah, my faith!" I added, grasping my dirk, as my chagrin and perplexity broke forth—"to be supplanted by such a rival!"

"Ay, a handsome cavalier like you, Philip, by a great bombarder such as Herr Otto!" continued Ian, laughing.

"I swear to you, by my existence, that I will cut his life short suddenly; for the fellow has laughed at me, and played the fool with me, too."

"Let the poor man alone! What right have you to molest him, or search out his secrets with a sword-blade? Besides, we march for the camp in a few days, and then, Philip, come battles and sieges, the leaguer and storm!"

"But he has given me the lie."

"Dioul! that is true," said Ian, gravely; "I had forgotten that. He insisted so sturdily that you were mistaken, and that she was a Troid, and so forth. You must exchange a few passes with him, and rip up a yard of his great breeches, were it only to let a few pounds of bran out of them; or we might order Phadrig Mhor to fling him into the canal—but we will see about it to-morrow, when you come off guard."

Ian had soon to leave me for the Place of Arms, where the regiment was exercised according to the rules prescribed by the Scottish officers in Denmark and Sweden; for the king's orders, that we should be trained with the utmost expedition, were stringent, as his entire forces were soon to take the field against Count Tilly.

The day passed on.

I longed for the morrow, which was to free me from my duty, and leave me at liberty to unravel the mystery which surrounded my beauty, and to punish the insolence of Roskilde, who had so openly trifled with my simplicity, and against whom I had conceived a most unmitigated aversion. Night, as it drew on, brought with it the sensations of irksome annoyance; for by the crowds which were passing into the Platz, I conjectured that my pretty actress was again upon that brilliant platform, with a thousand eyes bent in admiration on her graceful figure, her flowing dress and floating hair, her pure brow, and the star of light that beamed upon it; but, restrained by the strict order about spies in the city, I could not visit the theatre to behold her again, or hear that soft voice, which memory brought ever and anon so palpably to my ear.

The sun had set, and the storks retired to their nests on gable-nook and chimney-top; the canals turned from pale yellow to a muddy brown, and then became white, as the moon, partly obscured by a thin veil of gauzy mist, rose behind the square tower of the great church, and threw its black shadow far across the waters of the Elbe. That broad river seemed then, by the

moonlight reflected from fleecy clouds, white and spotless as milk; but the shadows of its shores were black and opaque, for its depths gave back the strong and clear, but inverted, outline of every chimney-head and pointed roof—of every tree, and boat, and barge—just as one may see them in the pictures of the Low Country masters.

A vault of the fortifications was appropriated for the guard-room of the officer on duty at the wooden tower (or the Tower of Rats, as it should have been named), and there I sat ruminating, and watching the figures of the changing embers which burned on the stone hearth, and endeavouring to decipher (by the light of a candle which stood in an iron holder on the fir table) the innumerable caricatures of the Emperor Ferdinand, of Count Tilly, of Count Carlstein, and the Duke of Friedland, with which my predecessors had disfigured the plastered walls, frequently representing the whole four hanging on one gallows, held up by the devil, from whose mouth proceeded scrolls full of Danish invectives and low German ribaldry.

I then betook me to reading Captain Jean de Beaugue's *Histoire de la Guerre d'Ecosse*, with his campaigns there in 1548 and 1549, and had become deeply interested in the assault made by M. de la Mothe Ronge with his arquebusiers, and the chief of the Kerrs with his clan, upon the Tower of Phernherst, and its garrison of English archers, whom they cruelly cut to pieces, making literally and savagely a foot-ball of their commander's head, when I was interrupted by my sergeant, Diarmed M'Gillvray, a cadet of the family of Drumnaglas, who came to inform me that Gillian M'Bane (a short and thickset clansman from the braes of Rannoch), who was sentinel at the tower-gate, had captured a very suspicious-looking personage; and that, as Gillian was sorely puzzled to know whether he had taken a man, woman, or goblin, Diarmed begged I would come with him to the post.

On arriving at the archway, the strong gate of which was closed all save the klinket, or wicket of three palisades, we found Gillian M'Bane swelling with importance, and standing on his guard, with his musket charged breast high, and ever anon he blew the match, the lurid light of which glowed on his dark tartans, his steel cap, red beard, and brick-red face, shedding a crimson glow over them all; and he was uttering hoarse threat in Gaëlic, for the dress and face of the prisoner he had made were fully calculated at least to startle and perplex his unsophisticated mind.

I immediately perceived the captured person to be a woman who wore a mask of purple velvet, which, though a common enough article of apparel in the cities of the Lowlands, had never

been seen so far north as the Black Mountain, or the shores of the Uisc Dhu. Hence the alarm of Gillian, on beholding a purple face with two eyes that shone through it like stars. The female, who was rather undersized, wore an enormous French hood, a plain buffin gown, and green silk apron, like the smart little wife of a citizen of Holstein.

"You have a pass, I presume, from the governor, Sir David Drummond?"

"I have left it at home," replied the little mask, in German nearly as bad as my own, but in a tone that made me start.

"You are of Sleswig, I think?"

"*Sí, señor*—that—that is—*Mein Herr*," she added with evident consternation. My heart seemed to rise to my lips!

"You have betrayed yourself," I replied, trembling in turn, for I knew my actress in a moment. Oh, how could I fail to recognise that charming voice!

"I swear to you, *Mein Herr*, that you mistake me for some one else. I am the poor little wife of a citizen, *Juliane Eichhörn*—who sells groceries in the *Bürger-platz*. My husband has been maltreated by the boors, and is lying in deadly peril at a farmhouse, some ten miles distant. A hundred yards from the gate I am to meet a messenger, who will tell of his health. Oh, *Mein Herr*! excuse me—excuse the order; for I swear that I have lost it, and am dying with anxiety to hear how my husband—my dear husband—my *Reichardt*, is."

All this was said with such an air of candour and sincerity, and accompanied by so many sobs and tears, that I was greatly moved and perplexed. Duty on one hand urged me to send her back to the city or guard house, from whence, if her story was false, she might be sent to the *Rasp-haus*; curiosity, love, and jealousy, all prompted me to fathom the story, and send her on her mission.

"I will follow her for a hundred yards or so—'tis only a falcon-shot from the gate," said I; "but, lest there should be treachery, lend me your pistols, *Diarmed*, and if you hear me fire, send out a few files to my assistance. You may pass, lady," said I, in Spanish, "but pray excuse my accompanying you."

I led her through the klinket, stuck *Diarmed's* pistols—a handsome pair of Highland pops, mounted with silver and bushed with gold—in my belt, and, with a mixed feeling of curiosity and apprehension, followed my mysterious little dancer; with curiosity and eagerness to make her acquaintance, and apprehension lest I might be led into some wicked ambush, or be found absent from my guard when the governor went his rounds which he did every night at a certain hour. And what, th'

you, decided me in perpetrating this rashness? only a glimpse of a pretty foot and ankle, as my dancer was about to step through the klinket!

Avoiding the road which led to Crempen, she struck into a solitary pathway that lay between low hedgerows, along the north bank of the Elbe.

"Señora," said I, in Spanish, "you walk very fast."

"Señor—I walk as I please," she replied, in the same language.

"Oho! then you acknowledge that you are not of Sleswig, but a Spaniard?"

"I acknowledge nothing," she replied, with some asperity.

"And that you are not the little wife of a citizen who sells groceries, but the charming Prudentia?"

"I acknowledge nothing," she repeated, but with a smile that showed her fine teeth under the dark mask.

"But I have every reason to suppose——"

"Cavalier, you may suppose just what you please. I am outside the barrier now; ha, ha!" and she laughed.

"But I may take you prisoner yet."

"Scarcely," said she, with another of her ringing laughs, as her small jewelled hand held before me the blade of a short but sharp stiletto of polished steel.

"The devil!—bright eyes and a dagger!—'tis quite a tragedy this!"

"It may end as a comedy, if you are kind to me."

"Well," said I, "the hour is late; here is midnight tolling in the steeple of the great church—allow me to act properly as your cavalier, and I shall be delighted."

"Many thanks, señor," she replied, and took my proffered hand. My heart beat like lightning; my head became giddy. Was it possible that I could be alone—at midnight, too—with that beautiful being, half woman, half fairy? I knew not what to say, and the light pressure of her little hand on mine sent every moment a thrill to my heart, but then the other lay on the hilt of a dagger!

We seem to love very truly at twenty—then it is quite an enthusiasm, a second nature that can feed itself on smiles and sighs; but, with all this, I could not help reflecting that Prudentia was leading me a devil of a distance. I thought of my guard, and trembled lest Sir David should discover my absence—a catastrophe which would lead to inevitable degradation, and realise all the prophecies of my father. My companion addressed me—

"Señor, you have become very silent—cannot you speak, to enliven this dreary road?"

"I was thinking, señora, how charming you looked last night—d how adorably you sang."

"A great many have told me that fifty times."

"Then you must have a great many lovers?"

"Do you think that all who see me love me?"

"If I judge from my own heart, I would say——"

"What——"

"Yes—that they must be compelled to do so," I added, with a tremulous voice.

"Oh, that is delightful! but recollect, señor, that though I shall be most happy to have you for my friend, my lover you cannot be."

"Come—that is not bad," said I, assuming somewhat of her tone of raillery, while her frankness charmed me. "I must, of course, be your friend *first*, señora."

"And then——" she added, archly.

"Ah! there is no saying what I may be."

"Oh! 'tis quite a compact—we shall be friends!" she added, laughing and clapping her hands.

"I trust you have not much further to go," said I, as we approached the muddy margin of the Elbe; "for I fear me greatly I am already liable to be tried by a court-martial."

"*Consejo de guerra?*" she repeated, turning on me her bright eyes, which shone like stars through the holes in her mask. "I should be miserable if I occasioned that; but you need come no farther. My husband's messenger is standing under yonder tree, and, as I have no wish that you should hear all the tender messages my Reichardt sends me, I beg you will stand here until I return."

"By that wicked smile I see you have no husband."

"You shall see that I have; but on your honour, as a soldier and cavalier, do not follow me, and permit none to approach us."

"Whoever does so, must pass over my body," said I, unsheathing my claymore.

With a light step she hurried to the water-side, where, from under the shadow of a group of willows, I saw a tall male figure step out of a boat, which lay concealed among the thick long reeds. To Prudentia he made a bow, the brevity, or rather hauteur, of which was indicated by the lofty nod of his feathers, and then they entered into conversation, and I saw her deliver into his hand a packet, which he placed in his breast.

CHAPTER XII.

WHO PRUDENTIA'S SPOUSE PROVED TO BE.

THE moon shone palely through a thin white haze that floated over the Elbe; the level shore lay all sunk in dark shadow, an

its reflection in the water was darker still. The river had still the same white appearance, and, where edged by the moonbeams, the drooping foliage of the group of willows seemed turned to bright crystal.

"Zounds!" thought I; "if it should really prove a husband, after all!" and I could not repress a sensation of bitterness and jealousy, when I saw Prudentia in close conversation with a tall, swinging fellow.

A brighter gleam of the moon revealed this person to me; he was a richly-accounted cavalier, and, being partly armed, his polished corselet glittered, and his white plumes were nodding in the breeze.

"Oho!" said I; "this is neither a citizen who keeps a booth in the Bürger-platz, nor a citizen's messenger; but a stout fellow who, like myself, feeds him with the blade of his good bilbo." Then, all at once, a horrible suspicion came over me. "Heavens! if Prudentia is the spy Sir David Drummond referred to! It must be so—else, whence all this mystery and contradiction?"

I cocked one of M'Gillvray's pistols, blew the match, and, considering that my suspicions warranted a closer examination, advanced boldly with my sword drawn, and discovered that a low flat boat, with six armed men, was concealed close by among the sedges of the bank.

"Now, sir, what seek you here?" I asked the tall cavalier, who wore a broad hat with white feathers, and over whose shoulder I recognised the crimson and gold scarf of our enemies, the Imperialists.

The stranger, who was an eminently handsome man, though advanced in years, passed a hand hurriedly across his brow, but left the señora to reply, which she did by laying a hand upon her poniard, and demanding of me, with considerable asperity, if it was thus I kept my word?

"Señora," said I, "my good-nature has been imposed upon; while I was told that you were, what I could not believe you to be—the wife of a citizen; or rather, while I believed you to be but an actress, I kept my post without advancing one step; but when I had every reason to believe that you were betraying me, by conversing with an Imperialist officer, I considered it my duty to come hither and arrest him."

"In time of truce!" said the cavalier, hastily.

"Truce, or no truce—yield, or I will shoot you through the head."

The Imperialist uttered a loud laugh.

"Stay, my young callant," said he, unsheathing his long toledo, and speaking with a strong Scottish accent: "I hope my convenience is to be consulted a little, both in the matter of shooting and taking."

"A Scot!" said I; "and under the banner of the Emperor Ferdinand?"

"When you see the Scottish musketeers of Leslie, Gordon, and Carlstein in order of battle, you will find that Scots are no rarity in Austria. Yes, young gentleman," said he emphatically, lowering the point of his rapier; "a brother Scot, but, like yourself, perhaps, a poor soldier of fortune. Come, let us be friends. Your hand, for I love your spirit; and my heart warms at the sight of the tartan, as at the face of an old friend whom one has not seen for many a year. You serve the Chief of the Protestant League—I, the Catholic Emperor; but we have come from the same land, and in boyhood may have climbed the same hill, and trod on the same heather. The fortune of war which places me in thy power to-day, may place thee in mine to-morrow; so let us never forget that we are kindly Scots, and that off the battle-field all soldiers are brothers. Seek not to know my errand, but return to your guard, which the señora tells me you have so foolishly left (under old Tilly, or the Count of Carlstein, that would involve the penalty of death); but return before you are discovered, and return with the conviction that you have had a narrow escape, for in my boat are six desperate fellows, who at a word from me would have blown you to pieces with their calivers. Excuse me, sir, if, instead of my name, and as a small gift to a countryman, I bestow on you this gold chain;" and, as he concluded, he threw around my neck a heavy chain which adorned his own, bowed to the señora, sprang on board of his boat, and in another moment I saw the blades of the muffled oars plashing, as six rowers pulled hastily away towards the Bremen side of the Elbe.

I again offered my hand to the dancer, and led her back towards the town. After we had proceeded a little way in silence, which I suppose she found somewhat tiresome—

"Ah, señor!" said she, "you no longer talk with me. I perceive you are displeased."

"Nay, señora; but I am grieved."

"At what? That I am not a citizen's wife?"

"No; but at your capability, pardon me—for deceit."

"Ah, señor, there is no deceit in serving one's country, or one's religion; and, in serving the Emperor, I aid the cause of both."

"But to be a spy—a spy! oh, it is an occupation so base, so horrible, that the person proved to be one is deemed worthy of instant hanging, without judge or jury, mercy or remorse."

"You tell me this," said she, pausing suddenly; "and yet I am going back among you."

As she spoke, the winning softness of the woman disappeared from her blue—almost black—eyes, and a red dusky fire, such as might have filled the orbs of a fallen angel, sparkled in them; and

she placed her hand in her bosom, where the dagger was concealed.

"Trust to me, señora," said I, "rather than to that holiday poniard, which, to say the least of it——"

"I trusted at yonder willows, and was deceived. You gave me your word——"

"Not to interrupt your tête-à-tête with Reichardt, who sells groceries in the Bürger-platz, or his messenger; but I knew not that the latter would come in the shape of an Imperialist officer."

The fire of her eyes passed away, and they assumed a pensive and caressing expression.

"Señor, you task my temper too much," she said, in a broken voice; "I take Heaven—el Altissimo Dios—witness, that I am a poor but honest girl—a poor actress, and the victim of circumstances. I appear richly dressed, with jewels on my brow and smiles on my face; the bright lights are before me, and the gay scenery behind. I see a thousand admiring eyes; I sing—I seem happy; but oh, señor, this is often with an aching heart, and withal my life is miserable."

"And yet," said I, moved to hear a sob from this creature of so many impulses—"and yet I have heard you singing so merrily at times."

"Every heart will have at least a placid moment among its many sad hours, and I have mine. One day you may know all my secrets; but not now—not now—here is the gate."

"Ah, señora! after our adventure of to-night, surely you do not mean to preserve your incognito towards me? What is the secret of that confounded door, which has so puzzled me, and made me the laughing-stock of my friends?"

"If I should decline, in revenge you will perhaps discover me to the burgomaster, who would pull yonder house down to reach me."

"Oh, horror! betray you! can you harbour such a thought? Then do not tell me—farewell—I have no wish to know——"

"I love your frankness, and *will* tell you. On reaching the first landing-place of the stair, remember to pursue the passage to the left—look behind the first door on the right, and press a black spot which you will perceive on the wall. To-morrow I will expect you; a million of thanks for your kind escort, and for to-night, my dear señor—adieu!"

She kissed her hand to me gracefully, sprang through the klinket of the barrier, and had disappeared before Gillian M'Bane could challenge her approach.

"Quick to your post, Craigrollo," cried he; "for the governor is going his rounds—he is approaching."

I heard the piper of the guard playing the salute, and in the

moonlight saw Diarmed M'Gillvray drawing up the ranks under arms. I hurried to my place in front, just as the governor, Sir David Drummond, a grey old soldier, wearing a broad beaver hat garnished with a white feather, and having a white sheepskin doublet over his buff coat, rode up, attended by two of Rittmaster Hume's regiment of horse.

"Young cavalier," said he, "I pray you keep sure watch and ward; see that all ingress and egress is prevented, for there are spies in the city, and the very route of our troops to join the army is known the moment it is written. Believe me, sir, my most secret orders are revealed. I dare scarcely think of them, and much less write them, for some demon seems to inhabit Glückstadt."

My heart tingled, and my cheek reddened with shame, as he rode off. My soldiers, especially M'Gillvray and M'Bane, had seen the little actress, and, if they betrayed us, both she and I were lost. But, happily, they were all related to that great federal tribe to which my mother belonged—the brave clan Chattan; and thus in security I rolled my plaid around me, and lay down on the hard bench in the guard-room, to dream of Prudentia and the pleasures of the coming day.

CHAPTER XIII.

TWO KISSES FOR TEN DOUBLOONS.

NEXT morning, the moment my guard was relieved by M'Coll of that Ilk and a new party, I hurried to my quarters, and found that both Ian and M'Alpine were at exercise in the Place of Arms. My heart beat lightly with pleasure and expectation; for there was a charm in the beauty of the señora, and the atmosphere of mystery surrounding her, that enhanced her value to an admirer so young as I; and I was further encouraged, by having heard the Baron Karl of Klosterfjord, and other cavaliers of the army, say that, in their loves and amours, the women of Spain and Italy always preferred strangers to their own countrymen, who were apt to place too great restraint upon them.

With peculiar care I dressed my locks, which were then very long, parting them fairly on the top of my head, in the fashion just then introduced by that true saint and martyr, his majesty King Charles I. of sacred memory,* and having a love-lock hanging far down on one side. I sighed for some more mustache, for at twenty one has such a scanty appendage of that kind. I

* Though our soldier served in Germany, his Cavalier principles are evident.

put on my best buff coat, laced with silver, and fastened my kilt with a diamond buckle, where the end came over my left shoulder, forming the true *breacan fheile* of the Celtic soldier. I had a ruff of point lace, and a falling band, over which I hung the magnificent gold chain of the Imperialist; a white satin scarf sustained my claymore on one side, and my dirk studded with Scottish topazes and gold-coloured stones from Cairngorm. After the most careful arrangement of all this military foppery, I descended the stair with a beating heart, to seek the secret entrance to the bower of la señora Bandolo.

"Ah, if she should have deceived me!" thought I, with a pang; "but here is the landing-place, and there is the passage to the left."

The first door to the right stood open, and close against the wall. I looked behind it, discovered the important black spot indicated by the señora, and pressed it with a trembling hand. A spring clicked, and a door suddenly opened right through the panelled wall of this passage, the wainscoting of which had hitherto completely concealed it. At the other end, I saw the chamber of Prudentia, whose retreat this close-fitting panel and double passage had always protected, when she chose concealment. The moment I entered, the charming actress arose from her little sofa, and hastened to receive me.

"So you have discovered my secret at last, señor; how droll that you should never have found it till now! I am so happy you have come, that I may thank you for your exceeding kindness last night. Our walk was very pleasant—and, hola! it has quite given you a complexion!" she added with a laugh, as a flush crossed my cheek.

While Prudentia ran on in this way, and while I seated myself near her on the little sofa, I know not what answers I returned, being wholly dazzled by her presence, and the perfect ease of manner she exhibited. I cannot analyse what attracted me towards her; the idea of marriage had never occurred to me; at the outset of a campaign, that would be very like running full tilt against a cannon's mouth. I thought it was merely for the pleasure of enjoying the society of a girl more charming and beautiful than I had ever met; and yet it must have been more than that; for my mind was full of passion and passionate words, which an excessive timidity repressed. I have no doubt that this timidity and admiration were expressed in my face; for when the señora looked at me from under her long silky lashes, her eyes glittered with the most beautiful smiles. She was invincibly seducing; but there were times when her expression became singular and inexplicable.

It she had appeared magnificent in her stage costume, the

simplicity of her morning dress made her more handsome than ever. She wore a plain black satin fardingale, a long stomacher with an open bosom, and a high close ruff; her arms were bare to the elbow. She had a comb, and a square of black lace, which from the back of her head fell gracefully over her neck and shoulders; and nothing in this world could be more pretty than the little foot and embroidered cordovan slipper, which rested on a footstool, and was made rather more than visible as she reclined back among the soft downy cushions of the sofa. The carved hilt of her little poniard appeared at times through a slash in her boddice; all her dress was plain and black, and nothing remained of the dazzling danzador but the roguish smile, the brilliant teeth, and those beautiful Spanish eyes, with their alternate animation and subdued fire. Young, and long a stranger to female society (by the seclusion of my college life), I was timid; she saw I was so, and, with the kindest goodnature, proceeded by her prattle to relieve me from my dilemma.

"I trust, señor, your absence was not discovered last night?"

"Fortunately it was not."

"If so, what would have been the penalty?"

"Degradation, by sentence of a military court."

"And for me you ran that risk?"

"For you, señora, I would risk anything—my life!"

"Señor—you quite overpower me."

"Ah, señora Prudentia," said I, with true and honest concern for her; "I tremble for your safety! do not, I beseech you—do not venture on such errands again. Had another cavalier been on guard at the gate of the Elbe, and had you been taken prisoner——"

"I would have smiled, and gained my liberty. I have been wrong, I know; but ah! surely," she added, casting down her fine eyes, "you cannot blame me for serving my religion, my country and king—for Spain leagues with Austria in this war against Christian of Denmark and Gustavus of Sweden. Besides, as a woman, I am alike ignorant of the laws of war, and the high punctilio of military honour."

"But you know the fate of—of—a secret informer," said I; for in such a presence the hateful word *spy* faltered on my tongue.

"No——" she replied, pouting.

"They are hanged on the first tree."

"Madre de Dios! and would you be so barbarous to a lady?"

"Señora," I continued, with the most sincere feeling; "from this gulf I would gladly save you. Tremble for us both, if the escapade of last night is discovered—for I would not survive you."

(Here was a good shot!) She laughed when I became so

serious; then pouted her ruby lips, shook back her black tresses, and, reclining on the sofa, looked at me with a droll and languishing expression in her half-closed eyes, saying—

“What, señor, are you in love with me?”

“Oh yes! señora,” I replied, quite overwhelmed by this naïveté; “indeed—indeed, you do not know how much I love you!”

At forty I could not have said more. She still continued to smile, and murmured—

“Ah, my heavens, he loves me! but, *o mal hayas tu*,” she added, “there is no such love on earth as that of which the poets sing and romances tell us.”

“It will ever be where you are, Prudentia,” I continued, venturing to take her hand in mine, and feeling how fast a whirl of thoughts was coming over me. At that moment I heard a sound. It was like a cough behind the wainscot.

I turned, but saw nothing. Had I looked more closely, a grey eye would perhaps have been discovered, glistening through a hole in the wood, from which a knot had fallen.

“Oh no!” continued the señora, hurriedly; “Lopez de Rueda of Seville, Juan Timoneda, and Alonzo de la Vega, have all sung of love, and portrayed their lovers, but none such exist. Now hear me, señor,” said she, gazing fully at me with her large dark eyes; “I would not, for the whole kingdom of Castile, be troubled with a regular fit of love, and all its accompaniments of hope, fear, and anxiety. Oh no! the whole ambition of my life has been to please and receive adulation—to dazzle and be adored—but at a distance. Now,” she continued, withdrawing her hand and casting down her eyes, only to raise them more seducingly than ever; “oh! I love so to be surrounded by admirers; to hear the plaudits of the crowd—the shouts that ring from pit to ceiling; to see the lights, with the music, the scenery, the joyous dance; and could I give up all these to sit and mope beside a man—and that man my husband?—oh horror, never!”

I might have been confounded by this morality, but for the tragi-comic tone in which she spoke, and the playful manner in which she had continued to draw off and on her tiny glove, to show the whiteness and beauty of her hand.

“And do you think,” said I, in the same manner, “that I can give up my hopes of glory and renown, the joyous society of my comrades, the pride of their achievements, the roll of the drum and the blare of the trumpet, to mope beside a woman, and that woman my wife? Remember the words of your countryman, Matias de los Rheyas. ‘One would imagine, after considering how Adam lost his innocence, Samson his power, Asher his constancy, David his holiness, and Solomon his wisdom, by having
— that a man would examine what measure he possessed of

all these good qualities, before he committed himself to the marriage state.' But is it really possible that one so beautiful cares not to be loved?"

"I have not said so."

"Ah, señora! I think that life would be valueless without the pleasures love strews on its way." My voice actually became tremulous. "Tut!" thought I; "'tis only a little actress." But she had the eyes of a queen!

"And you love me—how droll it is!"

"Dearest Prudentia," said I, becoming quite giddy with pleasure, as I timidly placed a hand on each side of her slender waist; "dearest Prudentia, with my heart—with my soul I do!"

"O los ojos negros!" she exclaimed playfully, as with her pretty hands she patted my eyebrows. The blood rushed to my temples—I ventured to kiss her cheek, and then drew back, abashed at my own temerity; but the graceful girl merely laughed, and said—

"I assure you, Señor Don Philip, that if any other person but you had ventured to do that, I should have been exceedingly angry." With a being so playful and artificial as Prudentia, I did not reflect how much good and sincere feeling I was perhaps lavishing before the shrine of a goddess who might yield me no reward; but, as I kissed her, my whole soul seemed to tremble on my lips, for I was but a boy—an ardent and impassioned boy. In Prudentia nothing charmed me more, next to her winning manner, than the luxuriance, the gloss, and the lustre of her magnificent hair. It was her most glorious ornament; fastened by two pearl pins, which contrasted so well with its blackness, it towered behind in rich braids, and fell over her neck in a shower of ringlets. I have heard it remarked that women of good hearts and happy dispositions have ever the most luxuriant hair and the finest teeth.

"'Tis all very well to get pretty presents from lovers," said she; "'to have them applauding my songs and dances, to have them for laughing with and talking to; but as for marrying—pho! I can never marry!"

"Never!" I repeated, not knowing very well what to say; for much as I loved her—and I did so with all the heedless ardour of twenty—I had not considered the chances of a climax so awful.

"No—never! look at these two couples on the benches under those trees on the rampart. There is a gentleman with a scarlet cloak and white feather; see how earnestly he talks to the young lady in the hoop fardingale; he looks into her eyes, as if he would there read what passes in her heart, but her eyes are cast down, and timidly she plays with her fan, and now with the

fringe of her stomacher ; she is pleased and confused—he earnest and impassioned ; 'tis the Baron Karl, of the pistoliers, and the burgomaster's daughter—they are lovers ! Nearer, look at that cavalier in the barrelled doublet and calfskin boots, who sits beside a lady in a coif and veil. He looks superbly vacant at the still waters of the canal, while the lady gazes quite as listlessly down the vista of the opposite street. Ay de mi ! they are married ! 'Tis a conjugal tête-à-tête—a married pair seriously employed ! Dost think that I could ever come to that, and live ? Santos, no ! Give me plenty of admirers, but never a husband, until I am as old as Dame Krumpel. See yonder dames—one in a red and the other in an orange fardingale. They are an old baroness and a countess—yet they are the most miserable women in the world. One has had two husbands without any children—the other has two children and no husband.”

“How——”

“He was killed at Lütter,” said the señora, with a burst of laughter.

I was somewhat silenced. I knew not whether to be perplexed or pleased by her curious morality and strange flow of spirits ; but the warnings of Ian came to my memory.

“Believe me, señor, I am very happy as I am ; marriage is only a traffic in which two people try to cheat each other, as sharpers would with clogged dice.”

I saw that nothing would be made of this little one by gravity, and resolved to encounter her with some of that banter which one picks up so readily at camp and college, when she resumed—

“And you would have me to go with you to the camp—ha ! ha ! where I should be scared by the aspect of your bareknee'd Scots.”

“Nay, señora, I had no such intention. The camp is not the place for one so fair—so tender. Women should never be there. Old Anacreon, who describes female beauty as being more powerful than fire or steel, was convinced of the impropriety of women going to war, as they were meant only for a soft and luxurious life.”

“How !” exclaimed my actress, after the manner of Medea, in the tragedy of Euripides ; “dost thou not know that I would rather stand thrice in the ranks of war, than once endure the pains of childbirth ?”

Then, blushing with the most charming modesty at the vehemence she had betrayed, she said—

“Did you not hear some one laughing ?”

I heard something behind the wainscot, again.

“'Tis a rat scratching—the place is full of those animals ; but señor, you must go, for I expect another visitor.”

"A visitor!" said I, as my old jealousy of the Hausmeister returned; "I vow to you I will not go; for if this visitor is a man I will run him through the brisket."

"Now, señor, do retire if you please; why linger?"

"Because I am so fond of speaking to pretty women."

"Doubtless you think to conquer in the field of Cupid, as Tilly and Wallenstein do in the field of Mars."

"Your friends the Imperialists will have another tale to tell at Vienna, when Lord Nithsdale's nine thousand Scots unfurl their banners against them."

"Señor—go—for now you annoy me."

"I am incapable of doing so."

"You tire me, then," she said, sharply.

"I am deeply sorry for that."

Prudentia saw that I was not to be beaten. A sudden gleam shot over her eyes; but she laughed, and half turning her back to me, began to read the comedy of "Florinea."

"How very unkind of you—to be displeased, because I still wish to talk with you!" said I, still bent on banter.

"Of what?"

"The admiration with which you inspire me."

"'Tis all very fine," she replied, keeping her back to me; "but none will love me as I would wish to be."

"In what way would you be loved, señora?"

"To desperation." Then she burst into another fit of laughter, and I caught the rogue looking at me over her snow-white shoulder. "Señor Don Philip," said she, suddenly closing her comedy; "could you lend me six doubloons—it would be *such* a favour—and then, as there is no play to-night, if you will dine with me, they shall be returned then with a thousand thanks."

"I have just ten doubloons in the world, señora, but they are at your service," said I, and opening the mouth of my sporran, which was a gift from Ian, and secured by a remarkable spring, I handed over the whole money I had received from the regimental scrivener to maintain me on our march towards the Weser. Prudentia laughed excessively at the fashion of my Highland purse, and put both her hands into it. To resist kissing her again was impossible; and for that I would have given ten times ten doubloons.

"Adios! señor Caballero, at three I will see you again; then we shall have such a nice little dinner, and a game at chess, or something else. Do not forget."

"Forget!" I exclaimed, kissing her hand; "how could I live and forget?" I hurried away, and the mysterious door closed behind me.

My heart was brimming with delight; I paused a moment in the passage, and heard a sound like the voice of the Hausmeister.

He seemed to be laughing somewhere, but it might be my own fancy.

In addition to my own pay, I had lent Prudentia five doubloons of poor Ian's; so I did not wish to see him until after dinner, which was yet two hours distant, and, leaving the city, I took a quiet stroll along the sunny bank of the Elbe.

CHAPTER XIV.

I PREVAIL ON PRUDENTIA TO ACCEPT OF A RING.

I WANDERED long among the fields and green hedges by the margin of the river, musing on the sudden success of my love affair, marvelling how or where it was all to end, and unable to determine whether I was a fortunate youth or a prodigious fool. I was very much in love with Prudentia; yet on reflection could not but acknowledge to myself, that to marry her, at the outset of my career as a soldier of fortune, would be very like tying a cannon-shot to my heels; and would inevitably curb my pursuit of that honour and fortune, which I had hoped to win by my sword in the German war. But Prudentia was so beautiful, so winning and attractive—she possessed such a piquant manner and mode of expression—that I was completely blinded to the future, and felt myself falling helplessly into the snare which the little god had laid for me.

At the shop of a Jew in the Bürger-platz I procured a handsome ring for Prudentia. For this I was to pay on the morrow, when she returned me the doubloons; and lest by any chance I should require money in the interim, the friendly Israelite lent me ten dollars, on condition that I should repay him fifteen on the third day, making in all, with the price of the ring, twenty-five dollars to be paid him. I placed the ring, which contained a fine Oriental amethyst and two pearls, on my smallest finger, and punctually presented myself at the habitation of my actress, not without fears that her door might again vanish, but happily the passage was open. As I entered, Prudentia, who was singing to the notes of her mandolin, came forward to welcome me, and motioned towards a seat with her hand, snatching it away the moment I attempted to kiss it.

"Now, señor," said she, pouting; "though I have invited you to dine with me, you must be respectful, or I shall be angry. I would expire with vexation, if you deemed this little return for your attention an equivocal advance on my part."

"How can you imagine such things?" said I, quite charmed

by her frankness; "but ah, señora! why will you still repulse me?"

"Because," she replied, with one of her brightest smiles, "that is the very way to attract you."

"True—I remember that Ovid makes Daphne fly from her lover, and as she flew his ardour increased."

"Ah! Ovid knew human nature very well."

"Then you wish me to be distant and diffident?"

"Diffident at least; for diffidence is the best sign of a lover's sincerity."

"Señora! then you do permit me to be your lover?" said I, more and more enchanted, and approaching her despite her injunctions.

"Señor Don Philip, you will be my lover, whether I permit it or it not."

"Oh yes!" I replied, while my heart beat like lightning and my voice sank; "for to see you, to know you, and to love you, Prudentia, are the same."

I slipped the amethyst ring upon her finger, and was just touching her downcast brow with my lips, when the door opened, and, if a look would have slain, the intruder had assuredly perished on the instant! The wrinkled dame Krumpel, who acted as servant or housekeeper to Otto Roskilde, appeared with a tray.

I now perceived for the first time that the table was covered for dinner, by a white damask cloth, edged with red silk fringe; upon it stood a trencher-salt and mustard-querne of silver, and several flasks of Malmsey, Orleans, and Spanish wine, cooling in a jar among ice. Covers were laid for two, with a knife and fork on each side of them. The latter, being a new invention in Italy and Germany, was wholly unknown among us in Scotland; and though I had read of it in "Coryat's Crudities, or Travels in High Germany," printed in 1611, being quite ignorant of how this steel instrument was to be used, I resolved to observe and imitate the fair señora, my hostess.

It may be supposed that I had but little appetite, for a true love fit always deprives one of that; but the dinner, which was both sumptuous and extravagant, by the number of dainties presented, must—as I reflected—have cost at least two of the ten doubloons I had lent to Prudentia—and would fain have given her; for it seemed altogether ungallant and intolerable to accept of them when offered back; but how was I to march without money, especially in an army like the Danish, where one had to pay for everything, and where all plunderers were tied to a post and shot without mercy?

We dined. I remarked that Prudentia had a very good ap-

petite, which I considered unromantic, and unfavourable to myself; the cloth was removed, and we lingered over the *vino tinto de Alicante*, and some of the luscious fruits of her own sunny clime. Reclined on the soft down cushions of the sofa, with her long veil spread over her shoulders, the señora lay half at length like a Moorish queen, taking from time to time a grape or a sip of her sweet wine, and looking at me with roguish eyes, through lids half closed with fun and merriment; for as the fumes of the wine mounted into my brain, I gathered new courage, and spoke only of love—love—but in broken sentences; for between two circumstanced as we were—a young cavalier and a dark-eyed coquette, a soldier and a gay actress—it may easily be conceived that darling theme was paramount.

I know not now all the tender and all the foolish things I said; but I remember that, at many of them, my pretty droll laughed immoderately.

I sat by her side. In the last gleams of the sunset her glossy hair and radiant complexion were glancing with that glow of light that made her like a beautiful picture. We were conversing hand in hand, at least mine rested on hers—but quite by chance—when she suddenly proposed that, to pass the time, we should have a nice little game, when she would afford me an opportunity of getting back my doubloons with interest.

The old slipshod dame Krumpel, who attended us, having been summoned, a pair of playing tables which stood in a corner—inlaid as for playing chess—were arranged beside the sofa, and I sat opposite Prudentia, who reclined among her cushions. Producing a pack of Spanish cards, she offered to teach the old Castilian game of *ombre*. I say Spanish cards, for they were essentially different from those used among us in Scotland (and against which King James VI. passed a law in the year 1621), having but forty-eight in the pack, being without a ten, and having the king represented by a crowned figure. As there is no queen, the next in rank is a knight, armed on all points, and designated *el caballero*.

She taught me *ombre* certainly—but whether after a fashion of her own, or that of the Castilians, I know not; but I rapidly lost my dollars, which she arrayed in line on her own side of the table, with the most pretty and provoking air.

Lights were brought, and then more red tent and macaroon biscuits, for the hour was growing late; still the protracted game went on, and if I regained a dollar I always lost it again; for between the attention I bestowed on the bright smiles and jewelled fingers of Prudentia, and my own intense desire to please, I was a very bad pupil and worse gambler. The moments fled away, and so did my dollars. At last Prudentia clapped

her hands, and laughed loudly as she threw down all her cards. She had made me bankrupt!

"Oh, foolish señor! O, bravo! Que fortuna!" she exclaimed; "how ill you have played! You must beware of sharpers and knights of the post. Ay de mi! You are much too guileless for this bad world. Ah! if I had the making of it, how much better it should have done!"

"Better?" said I, thinking of my dollars and doubloons.

"Yes, señor; for I would have left all the evil out of it."

"How innocent this creature is!" thought I; "and how sad it is that she is committed to a career of such perils as the stage!"

"Now, to punish you," said she, sweeping all my cash into the pocket of her Spanish *guardain fante*, "I shall keep your purse till to-morrow, for really I do not think you know how to take care of your money."

"While playing, in my desire to please I did but confuse myself; yet I am sure Prudentia will pardon me—a first love will make the boldest heart timid."

"This is all very pretty," she replied, smoothing back her jetty hair, and displaying the exquisite contour of her white arms; "but lovers are so faithless——!"

"A real passion has no end but death. While one is a lover, one will be true, for love retires where falsehood enters." Her free manner had infected me.

"Really," replied Prudentia, with one of her droll expressions of eye, "for a young student and soldier you are wonderful. I begin to be quite charmed with you."

"Nay, I fear you but jest," said I, taking her right hand in mine, and passing the other over her rich dark hair; "'tis I who am charmed. Oh, Prudentia, you are indeed beautiful!"

"Stuff, señor!" She gave another of her merry ringing laughs. I sighed; but, while she continued to smile, my heart beat quicker, and my head became giddy with wine and the thoughts that whirled through it. I sat with one arm clasping her waist.

We were both silent, but a deep crimson began to steal over the peach-like cheek of Prudentia.

"Que hora es?" said she suddenly, as a clock struck.

"Eleven," said I.

"Eleven! oh, señor Don Philip, you must go. What would be thought of me, if you were known to be in my room at eleven in the night?"

"The time has flown so quick," said I, rising with reluctance.

"But, señor, you must go—it is so late."

"And we have been so happy—but there is no remedy."

I could have slept very well in my plaid on the little sofa,

even on the mat at her door (for I was bewitched), but I dared not hint that, and took up my sword and bonnet to retire.

"And when may I renew my visit, dearest Prudentia?"

"To-morrow, at noon—exactly at noon," she replied, tendering her cheek, and in another moment I found the secret door closed upon me. I was on the dark landing-place of the stair, and groped my way to that dreary apartment where Ian Dhu, M'Alpine Roy, and strong Phadrig Mhor, were sleeping on the floor, side by side, in their plaids, with their basket-hilted claymores for pillows.

CHAPTER XV.

MY GODDESS DECEIVES ME—I QUARREL WITH THE HAUSMEISTER, AND RUN HIM THROUGH THE BODY.

AFTER breakfasting on toast and tankard, like the English, and being rallied by Ian on my abstraction and silence—after the morning exercise with pike and musket was past, when the first note of the clock indicated the hour of noon, I presented myself at Prudentia's, and was admitted; but I knocked thrice on her chamber door without hearing her musical voice saying, "Señor, enter."

"She is asleep—it will be a theatrical habit," said I, gently opening the door and venturing in.

The chamber was silent! The bed had not been slept on, and was stripped of its curtains; the furniture was in confusion; the mantelpiece and tables were deprived of their ornaments; everything indicated a hurried departure; and a note, addressed to me, lay on the little playing table, which still remained near the sofa, where I had left it twelve hours before. The note was addressed—

"To the Ensign, Señor Don Philip, these.

"Señor—I have been discovered, and forced to fly! My safety demands it, and thus, before you read these lines, I shall be, Heaven knows how far, on the road to Vienna. I could stay no longer in Glückstadt, for the truce is at an end, and your troops march in a day or two. When you imagine the grief I feel, in being thus separated from you, dearest señor, you will pardon this sudden flight, and excuse me returning you those doubloons and dollars, in place of which I have left you a lock of my beautiful hair—a lock which I will redeem; for if ever you should have the ill fortune to be taken prisoner, and see Vienna, fail not to ask the Señora Bandolo, at the theatre, near the Scottish con-

vent. And so, with a deluge of tears, you are committed to the protection of God by your best friend,

"PRUDENTIA."

So ended my first love affair, on which I had wasted ten doubloons and twenty-five dollars; and now waste four chapters. My first emotions were those of grief and mortification; my second were rage and spite, as I thought of my loss, my debts, and the amethyst ring of the Jew. The latter was but the gleam of the moment; it was the falsehood and duplicity of Prudentia which cut me to the soul. The most noble of passions had been made subservient to the most base—love to lucre.

"Dupe that I have been!" I exclaimed, tearing the letter to shreds; "but if he is within the walls of Glückstadt, that villainous Hausmeister shall smart for it. He must have been in league with her!"

I remembered having more than once reason to believe that I had heard him laughing in her room after I had left it; and, no way grateful for the good lesson taught me by the señora, sallied forth, intent on vengeance.

There was a certain tavern just without the Crempen-gate, which bore on its signboard the three golden helmets of the duchy. This, I knew, Otto frequented, and there I resolved to seek and slay him, or be slain; but having every wish to defer the latter part of the catastrophe as long as possible, I hurried to my room, put on my gorget, and stuck my pistols, loaded, in my belt. So much was I occupied by my own thoughts, that while charging these weapons I had never observed the sergeant, Phadrig Mhor, who was busy polishing Ian's armour, and who followed me, like a brave and faithful fellow as he was.

Half blinded by anger—for the idea of being so jewed and laughed at was intolerable—I hurried through the crowded Platz, bent on righting my quarrels *à la mode d'Edimbourg* (as the Scots Archers used to say in Paris), that is, with bare blade in the open street; and I had not gone fifty yards when I observed my man walking slowly towards me, in his great ruff and calfskin boots; his broad hat overshadowing his round face, which was fringed by a thick beard; his great espadone clattering on the pavement, a Dutch pipe in his mouth, and his right hand thrust into the pocket of his bombasted trunk breeches. There was such an appearance of fat contentment about him, that I was somewhat confounded when he walked straight up to me, and, with the most perfect composure, said—

"So you have discovered the secret, Herr Ensign?"

"Despite your falsehoods—yes!"

"I have to congratulate you," said he, with a manner undis-

guisedly sarcastic, "on being the favoured cavalier of the beautiful dancer."

"I thank you, Herr," said I, in the same tone; "but will thank you more not to puff the smoke of that devilish pipe under my nose."

"Ah! she is an adorable creature. I always thought her refined taste——"

"Would have preferred *you*!" I exclaimed, giving vent to my passion, as I snatched the pipe from his mouth and broke it over his nose.

His grey eyes turned white, and glistened with rage.

"Were we elsewhere than in the street," said he hoarsely, "I would teach thee better than to insult me, thou pitiful dandiprat!"

"What reck's it whether it be in the street or on a mountain that a man rights his wrongs?" I replied, unsheathing my sword. "Guard, guard! thou beer-bloated Teuton, or I am through you in a twinkling. I tell thee, fellow, thou art a scurvy varlet and shabby rascal!"

He swore a round oath in Spanish, and then another in German. His rage had a frightful effect on his visage; it was pale as marble, but convulsed; his eyes glistened like those of a cat, and every hair of his beard seemed to bristle with fury.

"Ha! ha! how savage this Paris is for the loss of his Helen!" said he, as he thrust his steeple-crowned hat upon his head, drew his long espadone, and attacked me with equal fury and address.

In the duels and quarrels between the students of the King's Collège and those of old Marischal, at Aberdeen, I had more than once drawn my sword in bitter earnest, but never against an adversary so formidable; and yet after three passes, observing that he did not guard well, and barely covered himself on the side I was opposed to, I resolved to force his sword. Springing forward, I furiously struck the fort of my blade on his, which my basket hilt arrested; and thus without risk was enabled to deliver a thrust which penetrated his collar-bone, and almost deprived him of the use of his sword-arm. Just at that moment we were separated by the people, who had gathered from all quarters, and many of whom, with that kindness and discrimination which distinguishes all mobs, seemed disposed to handle me pretty roughly, being a stranger and foreigner, but the brandished halbert of Phadrig Mhor overawed them; and on Ian, M'Alpine, Major Fritz, and Baron Karl of the pistoliers appearing, the Holsteiners retired, bearing away with them the stout paunchy Hausmeister, who kicked and resisted, storming and swearing in Spanish and German alternately.

"Dioul! are you mad, my cousin?" exclaimed Ian; "to be fighting in this way, and with our host—the master of our billet?"

"A man who is to accompany the army as a guide!" added the Baron Karl; "for he knows the country on both sides of the Weser as well as if it were his own property."

"I am sure of that," I replied, wiping my sword in my scarf before sheathing it; "for I believe him to be a spy of the Imperialists."

"Ah! how?—what reason have you to think so? He is said to be a respectable citizen—a Lubecker, who has been in Glückstadt for nearly a year, I believe—at least ever since that luckless battle at Lütter."

"I have my suspicions," I replied, unwilling, and indeed unable (without involving myself) to relate the evening adventure by the Elbe.

"Then, what have you quarrelled about?" said Ian; "not that painted dancer—your mysterious countess?"

"Painted!—the girl was beautiful as a houri!"

"Perhaps so;—but I never saw a houri, and so do not know; but be frank, and tell us, Philip Rollo."

"This way, then," said I, leading the four towards a retired part of the fortifications, where, without reserve, I related how foolishly I had entangled myself with Prudentia: how she had borrowed my doubloons, accepted my ring, and won my dollars unblushingly, and with smiles; and how I had every reason to believe that she and the Hausmeister were very good friends. Ian heard me with astonishment; for he was an unsophisticated Highland gentleman, and did not believe that such duplicity existed in the world.

"By my faith!" said he; "I think the predictions of the old people at Craigrollo are likely to prove true, and that, after all, the spoon of Sir Ringan——"

A gesture of impatience from me arrested him.

"Young gentleman," said the captain of the pistoliers, "you have been, I suspect, the dupe of two sharpers; but may the lesson teach you to beware of those pitfalls which beset the path of a soldier! This actress, the Señora Bandolo, is just what all Spanish actresses are, and never cared a rush about you: besides, without doubt, she must have been the spy who, from Glückstadt, Hamburg, and Altona, communicated all our movements to the Imperialists."

"And this varlet of a Hausmeister"——said I.

"Is doubtless her *majo*, her cavalier, or bully," replied the baron; "for the fellow's whole aspect, his cold pomposity and dogged eye, announce him one. Every Spanish dancer has a *majo*," he continued, as we adjourned to the *Three Golden Helmets*, and ordered a flask or two of Orleans.

"We should know something of them, Herr Baron," ..

Fritz; "you remember when we served in the Spanish guards——"

"Many things better now forgotten, Fritz. They are such ruffians that not even the Holy Brotherhood dare to attack them; and they intimidate even the actresses who employ them as protectors, and have to study all their caprices. When a lady is on the stage, her *majo* is in the pit, with his brown sombrero drawn over his brow, and on the least gesture of impatience or sound of dissatisfaction among the people, he throws back his mantle, uncovering the hilts of his poniard and toledo. Now," continued Karl, sipping his wine, "on the last night Prudentia danced, I saw this man, Otto, in the pit, and thought he had all the aspect——"

"Of that Spanish *majo* we had such a desperate brawl with in the Consistorio at Madrid," said Fritz. "The Imperial camp swarms with Spanish and Italian posture-girls and their attendants; but is this suspicious fellow to be really our military guide?"

"He has been well accredited," replied the baron, smoothing his short thick mustache; "so let us not, by vague suspicion, wrong any man in the public service."

"I will always consider him a villain," said Ian, who had struggled to understand what we were saying. "Philip Rollo," he added in Gaëlic, as he turned to me with a sombre aspect on his swarthy face, "you have dishonoured the sword of a Highland gentleman by notching it on the blade of such a wretch."

"Ian, has he not leagued with this girl to rob and ridicule me? What would you have had me to do?"

"Do!" reiterated the fierce M'Alpine, with his red eyes flashing; "by the grey stone of M'Gregor, I would have shot him through the head like a fox or a wolf, and as an enemy to mankind."

The captain of pistoliers smiled at this, which he did not understand, being sputtered out in Red Angus's fiercest Gaëlic; but he said—

"When we advance into central Germany, you will find yourself among a race very different from the *brave and faithful* Holsteiners; so I would pray you all to beware, gentlemen."

"Some devil must have led me to her room at first," I muttered, thinking of my losses and debts.

"Nay, she had seen you looking about for our room, and, leaving the door of her own open, had thrown herself down on the sofa in a graceful attitude, pretending to be asleep; that you might enter, see and admire her, for the cunning fairy knows her own power."

"Ah—just so!" said Major Fritz; "and did she not propose to

take care of your money after she had won it ; give you a quotation from Euripides, and rail at matrimony in the most charming manner, saying she was only formed for love, for light, for music—to be a bird, a butterfly, and all that ?”

“Never mind, Rollo,” said M’Alpine ; “thou seest that the same pretended innocence which bewitched thee hath beguiled others.”

“But this escapade has left me penniless, and I am indebted the sum of twenty-five dollars to a Jew in the Platz ; and the knowledge that I cannot pay it—even by this gold chain—stings me to the soul.”

“It shall never be said that a brother soldier lacked money while Karl of Klosterfiord has a skilling to spare,” replied the pistolier, placing his purse in my hand ; “here are four doubloons, more than the sum required. If ever you can pay me, it will be well ; if not, ’tis no matter. Money among gentlemen and soldiers should be as a common stock. If my comrade is an extravagant dog—like Fritz here—I assist him to-day, and he assists me to-morrow. ’Tis the rule of the camp,” he added, laughing, as he filled up all our glasses.

“Oh, Herr Baron !——” I began.

“No thanks,” said he, nursing his short brown mustache ; “no thanks, or positively I shall be angry. Among merchants a man always loses a friend when money is lent ; among soldiers, he always gains one. But I am astonished that you could have been so duped by a dancer—a damsel who exhibits herself in such a captivating undress to any rascal who pays a shilling at the door ; and more especially by this señora Prudentia, whose brother is known to be the greatest ruffian in continental Europe ; and who is as famous for his villanies, as the señora is for her conquests. You all know who I mean—Bandolo, the Bravo.”

We all—except Fritz—said that we had not the pleasure of his acquaintance.

“’Tis our dancer’s brother—Bandolo, the most finished rascal of past or present times. He was the terror of Madrid and Naples, where he practised his villanies for a season ; and in these cities he is said to have despatched eighty persons to a better world, and Heaven knows how many more may fall by his hand before some man has the hardihood to cut him off ! He handles the caliver, the rapier, and stiletto, but declines to use poison, alleging that there is something unmanly in it ; that it is the revenge of women ; and that it is as much beneath the regularly trained bravo to turn poisoner, as it is beneath the physician to turn quack doctor.”

“And is this person known to gain his bread by a practice so horrible ?” I asked.

"Certainly!" replied the pistolier. "When Fritz and I were in the Spanish guards, we have passed him in the streets of Madrid a thousand times; and knew him by his long look, his long sword, his dogged visage and ferocious eye, to be Bandolo the Bravo, who resided in the Plaza Mayor, and who, for ten pistoles, would strike him or me, or any man dead, on the first secret opportunity."

Having just come from our native land, where assassination was unknown, and where brave men settled all their disputes fairly by their swords, and always sheathed them on the first blood being drawn, we were as much astonished by this dark recital as two peaceful Holsteiners who were sipping skeidam and water in a corner of the tavern, and who set down their green crystal cups to listen.

"And Prudentia is sister of this ruffian?"

"The great Bandolo," said Fritz, laughing. "I dare say the little dancer thinks it is quite an honour to be the sister of so famous a man; for there are some who deem it better to be famed for bad deeds than not have fame at all."

"I'll tell you a story," said the baron. "Two gentlemen of Naples—a cavalier and a knight of Malta—quarrelled; and, according to the detestable practice of Italy, each sent privately, offering a hundred pistoles, to Bandolo, and requesting him to dispose of the *other*. The messenger of the cavalier came first; the second was the knight of Malta, whom Bandolo poniarded just as he was paying down the hundredth pistole, and he fell dead over the table.

"The bravo wiped his poniard, swept the money into his purse, and hurried away to the cavalier, his first employer, to relate that his enemy was dead.

"I greatly commend your dexterity, my worthy friend, Bandolo," said the cavalier, untying his purse from his girdle; 'you are quite master of your noble profession!'

"Si, señor," replied the Spaniard; 'all who do me the favour to employ me, find me punctual; for I am an old Castilian, and a man of honour, whom my father—a prince of braves before me—trained up in the way I should go; and to convince you, señor Cavalier, that I will not forfeit that transmitted honour, I must mention that the knight of Malta, whom I have just sent to the company of the saints, gave me a hundred pistoles to make an end of *you*.'

"But he is dead, and cannot call you to account for not fulfilling your pledge," replied the cavalier, overcome with terror.

"True, señor," said Bandolo, with a profound bow; 'but I am too honourable a bravo to break my promise. Excuse me, *illustrissimo*, but you must—*die*!' and with these words he buried his poniard in the other's breast.

"The cavalier lived only to relate this story, and in less than ten minutes expired; but by that time Bandolo was beyond the walls of Naples."

"He was hanged afterwards, of course?"

"Hanged? Oh! not at all. He is now said to be with the Imperialists, attached to the suite of a Spanish general of Ferdinand, and no doubt his sister has gone to join him; for it would be a thousand pities that a pair so worthy should be separated."

Much, or nearly all, that the baron said, was totally incomprehensible to Ian; but I translated the anecdote as we walked back to the Platz, and I also imparted to him, in secrecy, my night adventure with Prudentia, showed him the chain of the Scoo-Imperialist, and hinted my suspicions that she, and perhaps the Hausmeister, were the spies referred to by the governor in his orders to the guards.

"You know," I concluded, "that we have more than once heard this seeming German swear in very good Spanish."

"Stay—a thought strikes me. Dioull! if it should be the case?"

"What?" A fierce gleam shot over Ian's dark eyes.

"That this Otto may be the brother of Prudentia—the brave to whom the baron referred."

My heart leaped at the idea of having an enemy so subtle, so ferocious, so blood-stained, and terrible.

"Impossible!" said I; "how—that fiend Bandolo residing in Glückstadt, a sleek, fat, and well-fed burgher, with wide breeches and a pipe, a thorough Holsteiner to all appearance; a man trusted by the governor—a man who is to guide the troops of King Christian against some of the German castles and barrier towns? Oh! it is impossible, Ian—besides, whoever saw a bravo with so prodigious a paunch?"

"Perhaps so," said Ian, doubtfully; for a paunch is considered a curse inflicted for evil among the clansmen. "But, thank God! we leave Glückstadt to-morrow; and then we shall have other work than idling here, marching and countermarching as a spectacle for fat burghers and market wenches, drinking skeidam and Dantzio beer, and breathing the thick air of these frowsy swamps; and when we do meet the Imperialists, Philip Bollo—those boasting Spaniards and victorious Austrians," continued my enthusiastic cousin, throwing up his bonnet, "let us not forget to shout—'Hoigh! Clanna nan Gaël, an guillan a chie!'"*

* Clans of the Gaël, shoulder to shoulder!

Book the Third

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SCOTTISH STANDARD.

THE pale dawn was glimmering on the misty waters of the Elbe, and the storks were flapping their dewy wings on the steep gables and fantastic chimney-tops, when our pipers in the Bürger-platz blew loud and shrill the pibroch of Mackay. Hoarse and fierce, and wild and wailing, by turns it rang in the echoing streets "*The white banner of Clan Aiodh*," that martial air which so often has summoned the tribes of Strathnaver to battle and victory; and, from every street and alley, our men came forth in marching order to the Place of Arms. There the colours were unfurled, and Sir Donald, sheathed in his bright armour, sat on horseback with his sword drawn.

The fifteen companies of Highlanders fell quickly into their ranks; the musketeers in the centre with the colours, the pikes on the flanks—the drums, fifes, and pipes on the right of the line. Nothing military could surpass the splendid and imposing aspect of the regiment of Strathnaver, as it appeared under arms that morning in the Bürger-platz of Glückstadt; for, to the martial bearing and peculiar garb of the Scottish clansmen, our soldiers now united that steadiness, and strict unity of movement, which disciplined troops alone possess. On that morning I carried the banner of the chief; my post was in the centre, and with pride I glanced towards the flanks of that long and stately line. The bright musket-barrels, the keen pike-heads furnished by the armourers of Glasgow, and the polished headpieces, were glittering in the morning sun, but motionless as the rough hairy sporrans, the bare knees, and gartered hose; the banners, plumes, and tartans, alone rustled in the morning wind—those dark green tartans which my brave comrades were soon to dye in the best blood of the Imperialists.

On horseback, and muffled in a mantle, Otto Roskilde passed down the line towards the gate of the town; he had pistols at the front of his saddle, and a portmanteau behind it, for travelling; as in his quality of guide, or general informer, he was to repair with us to King Christian's head-quarters. Whatever my secret suspicions might be, I had as yet no reason to divulge

them, or to defame the accredited guide of the king; and indeed I could not do so, without the acknowledgment of having in person somewhat contravened the orders of the governor, Sir David Drummond.

"Herr Otto, your servant," said I, politely, as he passed me; "I trust you have suffered but little annoyance from your wound."

"Until you spoke—none," said he, a deep smile on his tiger-like mouth. Offended by his brevity, I gazed sternly at him, for there was something striking, if not terrible, in the fierce smile with which he honoured me. It was as deceitful and satanic as such grey eyes as his could assume. "But have Spaniards ever grey eyes?" thought I; "can this indeed be that frightful Bandolo, of whom the baron spoke? his sister's eyes were so beautiful——"

The order to *march* cut short my reflections. Ten shrill fifes and ten drums struck up merrily the famous "Scottish march;" pikes, banners, and muskets were sloped in the sun, and in broad sections we poured through the streets and fortifications of Glückstadt, the houses, bridges, and casemated ramparts of which gave back the tread of our marching feet, the rat-tat-tat of the drums, and the sharp note of the fifes, with a thousand reverberations, as we marched towards the Stor. This was not in the direction of the Imperialists; but there King Christian had planted his royal standard, and appointed the rendezvous of his troops.

It was but an easy day's march distant from Glückstadt, over a flat country; for the little duchy of Holstein, which unites the mainland of Denmark to the great continent of Germany, is almost level. The land seemed nowhere to possess what we Scots call a military aspect; there were few or no positions whereon the inhabitants might meet or repel invaders, yet the Holsteiners are brave men. The flatness of the country wearied us; we would have given the world for a glimpse of a mountain; and I frequently heard our hill-climbing clansmen marvelling how, when the country was made, the mountains were forgotten. The road lay straight before us, bounded either by heath, or cultivated fields, or by meadows, where enormously fat cattle were browsing; and from whence the pretty dairymaids, clad in short petticoats of broad-striped red and yellow stuff, with braided hair and hats of plaited straw, shading their blooming faces, ran off as we approached, being scared either by a rustic terror of soldiers, or the foreign aspect of our tartan garb. Thatched farms, shaded by pale green weeping willows, close-clipped hedgerows, or low stone dykes, succeeded each other in monotonous succession; here and there rose grassy hillocks, with

reedy tarns of green and turgid water between them, or occasional thickets of beech, where the summer birds were singing; but though there was little wood generally, there were abundance of wild-roses, which flourished by the wayside, and scented the balmy air.

There were no tremendous rocks like the Sutors of Cromartie, hurling the waves of ocean back upon themselves; no deep or savage glens, like Sulbhein in Assynt; no sheets of foam rolling in thunder over a precipice, like the torrent of Foyers; no vast forests like those of the Grants; no fierce streams like the Spey and the Fiddich; and no vast lakes like those inland seas that lie in the great Glan of Albyn; but everything was like the fat burghers of Hamburg and Lübeck, or the twenty-breached boors of the Low Countries—flat and sleepy, quiet and insipid.

About mid-day we crossed the Stor, and entered Itzhoe, a small trading town, which lies at the foot of a gentle eminence, defended by a small castle, on which we saw the royal standard with the hearts and lions of Denmark flying, announcing that King Christian resided there.

We found the little town crowded by his troops—the streets encumbered by artillery, powder and baggage waggons; the churches and houses were filled with troops; others were bivouacked in the fields along the bank of the river, and on our approach great numbers of our countrymen, who served under the Danish banner, came forth to meet us; for in the army, which mustered about twenty-five thousand, there were not less than twelve thousand Scots, including officers. Lord Nithsdale's three regiments consisted each of three thousand men; Sir James Leslie's and ours made two thousand more; and there were more than one thousand Scottish cavaliers, all officers, who led or served in the regiments of German Reitres, Danish Pikes, and the Count de Montgomerie's French Musketeers, many of whom I shall have occasion to mention in the course of my adventures.

On the very day after our joining the main army, we were nearly involved in a quarrel with the king, which, by disgusting his Scottish auxiliaries, might have ended all his projects of conquest, and caused his forces to melt away.

Christian IV., the hero of Denmark, the brother-in-law of our late King James VI., and uncle of King Charles I., was a gallant soldier, then esteemed no way inferior in personal qualities or reputation to his rival, the great star of the North, Gustavus Adolphus; but far his superior in military pride and keen desire for fame. Under his active government, Denmark had risen in importance, and, after her separation from Sweden, had acquired a powerful navy, a brave and well-disciplined army, a well-ordered

exchequer, and such prosperity as she never could have possessed in the days of her union; for an ancient kingdom, which possesses national institutions, should never surrender them while the sword can maintain them, and never place itself at the mercy of another; and right glad was I to see that my own native Scotland remembered this, when, in 1606, King James insidiously projected his incorporating union, which was happily baffled by the true patriots of the time, as I hope aggression will always be baffled and repelled by their posterity, lest we become a province of the southern kingdom.

Enfeebled by its unnatural union, Denmark, when once free of Sweden, began to assume a high place in the scale of European nations; and though the proud and haughty Christian could not surrender his claim to the Swedish crown, and while the Swedes gloried in their freedom, so recently acquired under Gustavus Vasa, both Christian and Gustavus Adolphus saw that the clouds of battle were gathering on the German frontier, that the day was at hand when they would be compelled to abandon their national quarrel and petty jealousies, and for common safety to unite their arms against the skill of Tilly, the courage of Wallenstein, and the vast power of the Empire. A treaty of peace between Christian and Gustavus had been completed at Copenhagen on the 20th January, 1613, principally by the mediation of our king, James VI.; but the approach of external danger had only smothered for a time the dispute of the northern kings.

To return: On the day after our reaching the head-quarters at Itzhoe, we were reviewed by the king, who ordered Sir Donald "to draw up the regiment in battaglia," on the plain before the gates of the town. The day was beautiful; thin as gauze, a pale haze curled up from the banks of the Stor, and the sun shone brightly on the quaint old town and older castle of Itzhoe.

Dunbar, our sergeant-major, a brave old cavalier who had served in the Scottish Horse Guards under Sir Andrew Kerr of Phernihurst, drew up the regiment in line, with colours and pikes in the centre; five hundred musketeers, with the drums, being on the left flank; and five hundred more, with the pipes, being on the right: the ranks were three deep.

Accompanied by the Earl of Nithsdale, the Lord Spynie, the Laird of Murkle, the Baron of Klosterford, and various nobles and colonels, all bravely mounted and richly accoutred, King Christian approached, and we received him with the highest honours; our pipes playing a salute, our drums beating the point of war, the colours drooping, the officers in front; while the whole line presented their pikes and muskets, according to the forms which have come down to us from the chivalry of the olden time.

Leaving at some distance behind the brilliant cavalcade which accompanied him, the king—a brave monarch, who had been almost riddled by bullets, and had more sword-cuts in his body than slashes in his doublet—rode slowly forward, and saluted the whole regiment by uncovering his head. He wore a suit of the richest blue Utrecht velvet laced with gold, a crimson cloak of Danish silk, and long Swedish leather gloves. Everything about him was magnificent. (In 1621, Christian was rich enough to be able to lend King James VI. a hundred thousand thalers.) Around his neck hung a gold chain, like the *catella* of the Romans, and he wore a magnificent gold scarf. His countenance was open, manly, frank, and ruddy; having a thick red mustache, and a clear blue eye. His horse was richly caparisoned in the Danish colours, having the leopard passant in the corners of the saddlecloth, and a chamfrain made of thick leather, boiled and prepared to encase the charger's head, under the bridle, which was thickly covered with gold-headed studs.

Our good regiment of Strathnaver, afterwards known as "the Scottish Invincibles," being a Highland battalion, was viewed by his majesty with marked attention. He rode slowly down the front, and up the rear to the right flank, where he acquainted Sir Donald with his wish, that we should march past him in review order. The whole line then fell back by companies,* and marched past with pipes playing and drums beating, colours flying, pikes advanced and matches lighted. A burst of applause came from our Lowland countrymen, who, as well as the Danes, crowded from their cantonments to behold us. Now came the quarrel already referred to.

The review being over, our colonel, Sir Donald Mackay, his two majors, Sergeant-major Dunbar, and all the officers, were summoned to the front, that they might kiss the hand of his majesty, who expressed surprise at the fashion of our colours, and required that we should place the Danish cross above that of St. Andrew!

"May it please your majesty to excuse our compliance with this order," replied Sir Donald, concealing his indignation under a calm exterior; "for we cannot impose the Danish cross on Scottish colours without failing in our duty and allegiance to his majesty Charles I. as king of Scotland; and sure I am that all these cavaliers, my officers, will agree with me. What is your opinion, Dunbar?"

"Swords and pikes!" grumbled the old fellow under his thick mustache; "we cannot carry the Danish cross without dishonour."

* He means, broke into open column.

"Dishonour!" reiterated the king, flushing with passion and raising his baton, but immediately lowering it on perceiving that the gauntleted hand of Dunbar sought the hilt of his claymore.

"I mean, dishonour to ourselves as Scotsmen," continued Dunbar, willing to palliate his bluntness; "for a superiority of Denmark over our native country would thereby be implied."

"But you serve Denmark, not Scotland; and Denmark has given both kings and laws to England," replied the king, who wished that the Scots, like all his other auxiliaries, French and Germans, should carry the Danish colours, that all their valour and achievements might accrue to the glory of Denmark; but it was somewhat unfortunate for his project that he commenced with our regiment. The officers looked at each other darkly under the peaks of their helmets; bit their gloves, and whispered together. "Gentlemen," resumed the king, with increasing anger; "excuse me if I do not perceive the justice of your objections."

"I trust your majesty will understand," replied Sir Donald, with the utmost firmness and respect, "that it would ill become us, as subjects of the Scottish crown, to put foreign badges on these our native colours, which for ages our forefathers have borne without stain and without dishonour; since that day when the Scottish host, arrayed in battle against the Saxon kings of the Heptarchy, saw the cross of the blessed St. Andrew span the noonday sky above their lines. We cannot here acknowledge a superiority, which, since the beginning of record, no country ever possessed over ours; for even so early as the siege of Jerusalem, Hegisippus introduceth Josephus as saying, when endeavouring to dissuade the Jews from a war with the Romans, '*Scotia quæ terris nihil debet*,' &c., which meaneth, that '*even Scotland, which is independent of the whole earth*,' was afraid of Rome."

"But therein I hold Hegisippus to be a foul liar, and Josephus another," grumbled our stout sergeant-major; "for our auld mother Scotland was never afraid as long as she had claws to scratch wi', as I will maintain body for body, on foot or on horseback, against any man in all Denmark."

A murmur of applause rose from our officers.

"*Air Muire!* it is well said, thou brave Dunbar," said Ian, clapping the old officer* on the shoulder, and shaking the lofty eagle's plume that adorned his own helmet; "*Dioul!* it would be altogether an intolerable thing if we, the descendants of those brave Scots whom the Danes could never conquer, and by whom they were overthrown at Luncarty, and in twenty other

* Sergeant-major in those days meant adjutant. See note concerning the colours.

battles, should condescend to carry their red cross on our blue banners."

Finding that he had such intractable spirits to deal with, the king concealed his anger, and relinquished his project for the present. We carried our blue national flag with its white cross against the Imperialists, without imposition or alteration; and, by my soul! they soon learned under which cross it was—the Scottish or Danish—that most heads were broken; but the king did not readily forget the affront we had given him.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SCENE OF BOITZENBURG.

ON the day immediately after the review, Sir Donald, with seven companies of the regiment, was ordered to cross the Elbe, leave two companies at Stade, and march towards the Weser, where he joined the troops of that valiant Welsh veteran, old General Morgan, who with four strong battalions lay above Bremen, watching the Imperialists. King Christian was determined we should suffer in detail, and suffer sorely, for our stubborn pride in the affair of the colours; thus, while the main body of the Danish army occupied Stade, the second city in the duchy of Bremen, our company of M'Farquhars, with the wing of the regiment under the major, marched to Lauenburg, the capital of a duke who there levies a toll upon the Elbe. There the colonel joined us with one company from the Weser, leaving the other four to defend Boitzenburg, for which place Ian was ordered to march the M'Farquhars with all speed, as Sergeant-major Dunbar was to be assailed by the Imperialists under the famous Count of Carlstein, who, with Tilly and the main army, was pressing forward, to drive back all the outposts of the Protestant king, to penetrate into Holstein and the Danish isles. On these marches our soldiers behaved with admirable order; there was no marauding, for though their pay was small, our poor Highlanders were moderate in their desires. Each carried a small havresack filled with Hamburg meal, and a little of that mixed in water, morning and evening, contented them. The ability with which they could endure long abstinence and hard marching is remarkable; for in the olden time the Celtic huntsman took but one meal in the day—his *diet mhor*. But there was a Lowland pikeman, Dandy Dreghorn, who, being unable to practice such abstinence, found himself impelled to swallow a whole bowl of cream, in a certain dorpe through which we passed; for this he was ordered to run the gauntlet, and that no taint of degradation from the stripes

might remain, I was required (according to the custom of war) to wave thrice the ensign of St. Andrew above his head.

It was about the sunset of an evening in the middle of July, 1627, when we approached Boitzenburg, which is a small town of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, pleasantly situated at the junction of the Boitze with the Elbe, the passage of which we were to defend against the Imperialists, until the last man of us had kissed the sod, for so were our orders worded.

A vast force under Tilly was approaching Denmark from the centre of Germany, and one of those columns, destined to pass the Elbe and Weser, under the great Count of Carlstein, was marching directly upon the point we were to bar. As the count was determined at all risks to pass the stream, our somewhat forlorn duty was destined to be hard and hazardous; but the affair of the colours still rankled in the mind of King Christian, and he had resolved, and even said to Lord Nithsdale, that "the regiment of Strathnaver should pay dearly for its Scottish pride!"

As we approached the town, which was surrounded by a wall, the gates were shut, and although our comrades who occupied the place knew us right well by our tartans, and the sound of our pipe, which was playing *Beallach na Broige*, according to the custom of war, observed in all forts on the approach of armed parties, they closed their barriers, turned out their guards, and on our halting at a hundred paces distant, sent forward an officer. This cavalier, who proved to be John Learmonth of Balcomie, the senior captain of our pikes, asked, sword in hand—

"What troops are these?"

"M'Farquhar's company of the regiment of Strathnaver, in the service of his Danish majesty," said Ian.

"You may enter, gentlemen," replied Learmonth.

Then we shook hands; the gates were opened, the piper again struck up, and we marched into Boitzenburg, where four hundred of our comrades received us with a true Highland welcome.

Old Dunbar, our sergeant-major, had every qualification for a commander. Well versed in all the theories, as well as the sterner practice of war, he had left nothing undone that would enable him to defend his post like a man of honour; a soldier by race and name (for he was one of the Dunbars of Dyke, in the lordship of Spynie), to his natural and acquired talents he added a sound judgment, a strong mind, and the bravery of a lion, with the form and the heroism of a Wallace; and withal his disposition was mild and gentle. He issued few orders, but these were always marked by brevity, and obeyed with alacrity; and, as these orders were never unnecessary, they were fulfilled with the most perfect reliance upon his sagacity and courage.

Passing through the town, we crossed the river by a bridge, and took up our quarters in a strong sconce, which Dunbar had erected on the Luneburg side, and which, with the assistance of Captain Learmonth (who acted as his trench-master or engineer), had been flanked out in such a manner that, with twenty pieces of cannon, it swept the river above and below the bridge, the centre of which he had carefully undermined to cover our retreat, in case we should have to retire.

The bastions of this redoubt were of earth, faced up with smooth turf, the embrasures being well splayed out to afford a range for our culverins; the front was high and based with stone, as a pretty deep graff was dug round them, and filled by water from the Elbe. Within these defences were several substantial stone houses, which by good fortune stood there before the war, so that we were very comfortably quartered; and as all the country to the southward had been laid under contribution, we had a good store of bread, beer, bacon, cattle, with fodder for them, not forgetting several kegs of skeidam, and low country wine.

The town of Boitzenburg had been long before abandoned by its inhabitants, who fled with their most valuable effects at the approach of the Imperialists; thus while doors, windows, and floors were to be had for the mere trouble of carrying them away, we had no lack of fuel, and laid up a great store for the double purpose of supplying ourselves and burning the place if compelled to abandon it. The evening of the third day was just closing, and the broad, yellow, and lurid sun was shedding his farewell rays along the waveless bosom of the Elbe, on one side throwing into deep shadow the walls of the town, the arches of the bridge, and the ramparts of our redoubt, while the other side was all bathed, as in a deluge of warm light, when one of our sentinels (Gillian M'Bane) fired his musket, and announced the approach of the Imperialists.

The report of that musket made every heart leap. The drum beat hoarse and rapidly! From the desolate town our stragglers hurried into the redoubt; the sluice which fed the wet ditch was opened; the klinket of the palisades was closed and barricaded; the cannon were run back and double shotted; we stood to our arms, hoisted the Danish colours, but placed our own Scottish ensign on the highest parapet, and with the last gleam of sunset saw the enemy debouching heavily in column, among clouds of dust from the Reinsdorf road, and from the green woods and undulations of the fertile country.

With his helmet open, and a grim expression on his bearded face, old Dunbar was observing them closely through his Galilean glass as they poured along—the musketeers, in buff coats and

steel caps, marching with matches lighted and their rests slung to their sword-belts, the pikemen well armed in back, breast, and head-pieces, with tassettes to cover their thighs, and the horsemen in complete mail, with swords, calivers and demi-lances; six pieces of cannon, and a howitzer for throwing shells—a new invention of that great warrior, Ernest Count of Mansfeldt, that prince of soldiers of fortune, and champion of the Queen of Bohemia, for in many a bloody field he bore her glove upon his helmet.

"Swords and pikes!" said Dunbar, closing his glass sharply; "there are ten thousand men under yonder blue banner, not a helmet less, and we have here but five hundred true Scottish hearts to make good the sconce against them!"

They halted, but beyond cannon shot, their infantry remaining in dense column, with the horse on their flanks and the artillery in front; and in a few minutes after we saw an officer, with a white flag displayed from his demi-lance, ride forward accompanied by a trumpeter, who sounded a parley.

"Ensign Rollo," said Dunbar to me; "you know something of scholar-craft, and speak other tongues than our auld mither Scots, take a stout fellow with you—go forth, and learn what yonder gay galliard requires of us."

Pleased with this opportunity, and proud of the selection among so many men of good birth and acknowledged valour, I summoned Phadrig and Gillian, gave a last look to the clasps of my harness and the locks of my pistols, drew my sword, and leaving the sconce by a private klinket, deliberately approached the Imperialist, who remained on horseback motionless as an iron statue, observing me narrowly between the ears of his horse; for I have little doubt that one part of my garb—the kilt—must have impressed him as being somewhat remarkable.

His own attire was singularly magnificent, even for the service to which he belonged; for there were many of the general officers, such as Count Carlstein, who affected the grandeur of princes, and had frequently a troop of cuirassiers as their guard; while the colonels of the raggamuffin Walloon infantry kept their gilded coaches in camp, and ate and drank out of vessels of silver, some of them having even a secretary, who (as few of them could write) was generally the most useful of their vast train of servants.

His helmet, cuirass, and the tassettes which covered his thighs, were of the brightest steel; the open sleeves of his doublet were cloth of gold, the inner were of crimson velvet; his gloves were of steel, and reached to his elbows; his boots were of black leather, furnished with enormous jinglespurs, having metal balls in lieu of rowels; his long Toledo hung in a scarf of crimson and gold

interwoven, and from its hilt dangled a sword-knot of gold and black silk.*

His figure is yet impressed upon my memory.

Tall, handsome, and about forty years of age, his features were stern, grave, and sometimes sad; though, when his eyes became animated, they filled with fire. A deep scar on his forehead showed that before this he had met death face to face; and there was a frank bluntness in his manner which showed a long familiarity with danger, and with every phase of life.

"Your servant, my young friend," said he, in a strong Scottish accent, and smiling as we saluted each other with our swords; "if you have forgotten our meeting on the Elbe near Glückstadt, and the pretty actress Prudentia, I have not."

"Pardon me, sir, but I did not recognise you in your helmet. You see, in memory of that meeting, I have still worn your gold chain."

"Ah! you must prize it more when I tell you that it is formed from the gold of that identical cup with which Knox and Calvin so often administered the sacrament to the English refugees at Frankfort. Old Spürledter, one of my troopers, picked it up on the march through there, and so I had it made into a chain."

"It were a thousand pities to deprive——"

"Tush! I shall soon find another; if you offer it back I shall fling it into the Elbe."

"You wish to parley with us, sir?"

"The fact is we are anxious to cross the river, and you have most annoyingly cast up a sconce right in our way; and, as this sconce is garrisoned by five companies of Highlanders, we count upon a desperate resistance."

"You reckon rightly, sir," I replied proudly; "there is a high spirit among my comrades in yonder place. This will be the scene of our first encounter with your Austrians; and I will answer for it, that as Scottish soldiers, with the high memory of a great and glorious past urging us to win new honour for our fatherland, many a heart must pour forth its best blood before either the Counts of Tilly or Carlstein shall cross the Elbe."

At that moment a roll was beaten on a drum within the redoubt.

"Thou art a fine fellow!" said the cavalier of fortune, "and I hope to spend an evening with you over a can of wine, after you are taken prisoner; but your comrades are waxing impatient—tell the sergeant-major, Dunbar——"

"Hah! you know that we are commanded by Dunbar!"

"The bravest man under the Danish flag! I know more; for

* Still worn by the Austrians to commemorate the loss of Jerusalem.

I am aware that he has but five hundred Highlandmen in the sconce, under the Captains M'Farquhar, M'Coll of that Ilk, Learmonth of Balcomie, Munro of Oulcraigie, and M'Kensia of Kildon; for you cannot sneeze on the Danish side of the Elbe but straightway we Imperialists hear of it at Vienna."

"I believe there are spies among us," said I, thinking of the Hansmeister.

"Tell Dunbar that the famous Count of Carlestein—(ah! he is a devil of a fellow, that Count!)—with ten thousand old ironfaces, the flower of Tilly's Austrians and Spaniards, is about to force the passage of the Elbe; that he would gladly, for the sake of Elizabeth Stuart, the Bohemian Queen, spare the lives of her countrymen; and that, if they will leave the bridge of Boitzenburg free, they shall have leave to march wherever they please, with all the honours of war."

"Cavalier," I replied, "you may tell the great Count of Carlestein that we could never accept of such terms with honour. Our orders are to defend the banks of the Elbe to the last gasp, and so will we defend it, or die by its shore!"

"Well," said he, as he reined back his horse and sheathed his sword, "on your own heads be the blood that is shed, and you will have but Dunbar to blame for the extermination that awaits you—farewell!"

He galloped off, accompanied by his trumpeter, and I returned to the sconce, to make my report to Dunbar.

"Ye hae dune weel, my young birkie," said he; "ah! pikes and pistols! Let them come, and we will show Count Carlestein that we care as little for Austrians as our forefathers did for Rome, despite that lying loon, Hegiaippus. Hallo! provant master! serve the lads round wi' a quaigh fu' o' brandy; and let us all drink '*Tir nan beann, nan gleann, a' nan gnaisgeach!*' (the country of mountains, of valleys, and heroes,) for it may be the last drop many among us will taste in this world, and my mind misgives me that we'll no get muckle in the next. Let the pipers blow fire into our hearts, while Balcomie's company pile their pikes, and stand by the bastions to work the cannon!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW OUR OLD SCOTTISH BLADES POMBELLED THE IMPERIALISTS.

As we had secured, sunk, or destroyed all the boats and other craft on the Elbe, the Imperialists had no other means of crossing but passing, at push of pike, the long stone bridge which spanned the river by its strong and stately arches; and as the whole line

of it, and the approaches thereto, were liable to be raked by the cannon and musketry of the sconce, they made immediate preparations to gain the latter by assault.

There were not less than ten thousand men approaching to force this passage, which our five hundred Highlanders were left to defend. They were led by the great Count of Carlsstein, whose name was only less familiar to us than that of Count Tilly. He was said to be a distinguished soldier of fortune, on whom the ambitious but generous Emperor had freely bestowed (that which did not belong to him) a Bohemian coronet, together with a free gift of that magnificent Castle of Carlsstein, built by Charles IV., eight miles from Prague, and where the regalia of the conquered palatinate were kept.

At length, then, we saw them, and were invested and surrounded by those haughty, proud, and ferocious soldiers of the Empire, to whom battle was a pastime, and human blood as water; the terror of the Protestants and scourge of Bohemia; those sons of rapine and outrage, steeped to the lips in the darkest crimes, yet flushed by the memory of a hundred victories. Numerous though they were, our little band of kilted clansmen stood to their arms undauntedly, feeling an honest confidence in their own valour, with a hatred of their enemies; for in the name of religion, with the cross of God on their standards and on their breasts, those Imperialists, wherever they had been victorious, at Fleura, at Bergen-op-Zoom, and after every field from Prague to that of Lutter, had committed such atrocities as would have made even the heart of a Nero recoil.

Full-orbed, and round as the shield of Fingal, the unclouded moon rose brightly above the Elbe; its glassy waters rolled in light, and the woods and thickets which fringed the southern bank, together with the old fantastic houses of Boitzenburg on the north, were all bathed in that silver sheen, which in brightness contrasted so strongly with the deep black shadows.

Under the central arch of the bridge three red lights were reflected in the current of the river. These were the lanterns of our miners, who, under the direction of the Laird of Balcomie, were sinking a chamber in one of the piers, and charging it with powder. So bright was the lustre of the July moon that we could discern every movement of the enemy as clearly as if it were noonday.

A regiment of musketeers, clad in white buff coats and steel caps, and having two large banners with the Austrian Eagle and Burgundian Cross, poured along the road, and, under a discharge of their cannon (which took possession of an eminence about five hundred yards distant), advanced to storm and destroy the palisades which protected the outer side of our wet grass; two other

regiments endeavoured to outflank the redoubt, and force, by the river side, a passage to the *tête-du-pont*, but a heavy fire met them at every angle; their cannon-shot began to knock splinters of stone and clouds of earth about us, or crashed into our parapets, and now began in earnest the whole uproar of war, which now I heard for the first time.

Our company of M'Farquhars had to defend that face of the sconce which swept the roadway; and over our earthen parapets we poured a close and deadly fire, to which the Imperialists replied with equal rapidity, but not with equal effect; for while our men levelled over a rampart, which protected them breast high, the assailants were wholly exposed, and levelled their long matchlock-muskets over iron forks; but the front rank came on with arms slung, and using only hatchets attacked the palisades, hewing them down frantically in their efforts to force a passage to the ditch.

"Shoulder to shoulder, my men! fire close, and fire low!" cried Ian, whose eyes flashed brighter as the conflict increased; and though it was his first, he was as cool as old Dunbar, who had served with the Scottish bands under Hepburn in Bohemia. His example strung my heart, and recalled my somewhat scattered energies, which had become a little confused; for every instant a heavy cannon-shot boomed over our heads, to crash among the roofs of the town, or with a dull heavy sound, sank deep into the turf breastwork of the sconce; while the hiss of the musket-balls, which flew past us like a leaden storm, was ceaseless as the splash of rain upon the casement. The whole fort was enveloped in smoke, for as our mousquetade mingled with theirs, we could no longer see the enemy; but we heard the crash of the axes among the falling palisades, the cries of the wounded, and the yells of the fierce and eager; their incessant war-cry of "*Sancta Maria! Sancta Maria!*" and the din of their drums beating the charge; but into the dark and opaque cloud, from the bosom of which all these dire sounds proceeded, our brave clansmen shot fast and sure, at the practised level; and Balcomie's lieutenant, a brave old soldier, David Martin of that Ilk, inspired his pikemen to handle our brass culverins in such wise, that every bullet must have made a frightful lane through the dense column of attack.

A triumphant shout—the true wild *scaigh* of the Scottish Highlandmen—mingled with the shrill notes of the pibroch ringing from the four angles of our fort, announced that, baffled in their efforts to reach the bridge, the Imperialists had fallen back, and we redoubled our efforts.

Many of our finest men lay dead or bleeding profusely around us. Ian and I took the muskets of two, turned over their bodies, and emptying their cases of bandoliers, fell into the front rank

and fired like private men; but in silence, for our gallant Highlanders required neither voice nor action to urge them to the performance of their duty as soldiers; for they were all stanch men and true, of that old race which, as our bards say, sprang from the soil, and which in other years had tamed "the eagles of the kings of the world."

The assailants were now so close to us that the musket-balls pierced breastplates and buff coats like silken vests; and as many of our poor fellows who were unable to crawl away, bled to death just where they fell, the planks of the platforms soon became plastered with a horrid and slippery mire of blood and earth, for every moment the cannon-balls of the Austrians tore the latter from the faces of the embrasures, and cast it in showers about us. There were some frightful wounds received by our comrades that night.

Ronald Gorm, a sergeant of pikes (in other times a rich gentleman-drover from the braes of Lochaber), had his face shot away by a ball from a basilisk; another had his lower jaw torn off by the ball of a falconet; and a piper, Red Fergus of the Clan Vurich, was shot through the nose and eyes, but lived for three days in blindness, and such agony that it would have been a mercy under God to have pistoled him outright.

This was my first bout with an enemy, and that these horrors impressed me I am not ashamed to own. More than once my heart shrank within me on seeing a strong and stately fellow doubled up like a tartan plaid, and hurled out of the ranks, with a cannon-ball fairly through his body. The cries of the wounded were piteous, but there was no time to heed them; though every instant we had to drag away the fallen men, whose bodies encumbered the wheels of the cannon and parapets, through the embrasures of which we suffered severely from the fire of the assailants.

At last, seeing probably the futility of attempting to storm a work so resolutely defended, until he had prepared means to effect the passage of the ditch which encircled it, and which was both deep and broad, the baffled Count of Carlstein, about midnight, and just when the moon was waning, made his trumpets sound a retreat. The fire of the artillery ceased on the eminence; the infantry retired under cover of some rising grounds beyond it, where they bivouacked, lighted their fires, and set about cooking, acting true to the soldier's proverb—"The dead to their graves, and the quick to their suppers;" the smoke cleared away, and we saw the shattered stockades; the Reinsdorf road heaped with bodies piled over each other, swords, pikes, drums, helmets and muskets; and by the light of the winking moon, we could see the miserable maimed, crawling on

their hands and knees towards the Elbe, seeking water to quench that fiery thirst, which the exhaustion of the assault and the agony of their wounds made more poignant.

I was gazing dreamily at this sudden change in the prospect from the redoubt, and still seeming to hear the united roar of the attack in my ears, when the loud clear voice of Dunbar aroused me.

"Piper—blow the gathering! M'Farquhar, Kildon, brave gentlemen, muster your companies, call the roll, and number the dead!"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CROWN OF FIRE.

For us, a mere "handful," opposed to a column so powerful, there could be no rest; thus, while one half of our slender force remained under arms, the others worked hard at the repair and further strengthening of the works, by means of cannon-baskets filled with earth, sandbags, beds and mattresses, taken from the houses, and chandeliers made of roofs and flooring sawn into billets, trussed up in bundles, and banked over with turf. We made the utmost exertion, because, though unmolested, we augured, by the constant report of fire-arms in the Imperial bivouac, that the troops were busy discharging, cleaning, and preparing their fire-arms for a second attack.

In one deep grave, within the sconce, we buried our dead, placing more than forty of them side by side, and so covered them up. The last we put in was the serjeant, Ronald Gorm.

"Poor Ronald!" said Phadrig Mhor; "'tis thou must perform the *faire-chloideh*;" for it is a Highland superstition that the soul of the last person buried in any place must keep watch there until another corpse is brought, whose spirit relieves the former.

"Ronald's ghost will not be long on guard," said Ian; "for I am much mistaken if more heads will not be broken before to-morrow." The piper played a sweet and sad lament at this unseemly funeral; in the old Highland fashion, we placed four large stones above that ghastly tomb, and, in the language of the bards, bade them speak to other years, and to the men of other times.

The wounded we sent off to Glückstadt in rough country carts, through the open joints of which their blood ran dripping on the dusty road. As a protection, a small guard of pikes accompanied them; for our stragglers and sick were frequently murdered

the boors, whose cupidity their silver buttons and ornaments served to excite.

A ration of skeidam was served round to us all; and about sunrise, after doubling the guards and seeing that the Imperialists, though within cannon-shot, were not intending to molest us, Dunbar ordered our men to "pile arms," and take some repose. Poor fellows! they lay down to sleep in their armour, and with their bare legs on the gory platforms or cold earth; and there, amid the scattered shot, the exploded shells, the blood gouts, and the broken weapons, I enjoyed the sound sleep of a wearied soldier, and undisturbed by the reflection that it might be the last I should ever enjoy; and you, good reader, would have slept sound also, after the toil, the carnage, and excitement of such a night as that at Boitzenburg.

Anxious to defend his post with honour, Dunbar—that brave old cavalier—never slept, but remained watching every movement of the enemy, whom we permitted, without molestation, to bear away their wounded from under the very muzzles of our cannon; but the moment this was over, the pipes sounded, the drums beat, and we were again roused to man the ramparts, for again they were coming on, and with renewed vigour, for three battalions of Spanish Imperialists had joined the Count in the night.

"Pikes and pistols—here they are again!" cried our veteran major, or sergeant-major, for according to the Danish etiquette we called him both; "but fear not, my brave hearts, for God is with us, and His hand is over us. Believe me, gentlemen, our cannon are noway inferior to theirs for not having Latin mumbled, and holy water sprinkled, over them by the superior of the Jesuits. So to your guns, my wight cannoniers—to them again with handspike and linstock—with rammer and quoin!"

About the closing in of the evening, a dense column of Spanish infantry, with pikes and musketeers intermingled, suddenly debouched upon the roadway from behind the little eminence which had sheltered them, and poured impetuously forward, to assail again the stockades of the graff; while a brigade of Austrians rushed towards the sluice which admitted into it the water of the Elbe; and though thrice, by sheer dint of cannon and musketry, we drove them back, they forced a passage to the angle of the ditch, and climbing literally over piles of their own dead and dying, cut the chains by their axes, and, closing the sluice by sledge-hammers, retired with a loud hurrah; for immediately the water in the ditch began to subside. On this the furious Spaniards redoubled their efforts to carry the palisades; but as these projected at the angle of forty-five degrees from a steep bank, and were swept by our fire, it was a task of the greatest

danger and difficulty; yet these valiant hearts accomplished it, and reached the inner edge of the ditch; but as fast as they mounted they were shot down, and when struck we could see the blood spouting from their buff coats and corslets as if ejected from a syringe.

"Fire on the sluice!" cried Dunbar to Captain Learmonth, whose pikemen still worked our cannon; "break through the planks—admit the Elbe, and fill the graff again."

"It is impossible!" replied that cavalier; "for our guns cannot be depressed so low."

"Then Heaven help us! for they will soon gain this poor sconce by storm."

"We can still retire by the bridge," said Learmonth.

"Without orders?" exclaimed Dunbar, the umbriere of whose helmet was, at that moment, torn away by a shot; "nay, I will die first!"

Learmonth, who was levelling a cannon, was about to make some devil-may-care reply, when two musket-balls struck him: one pierced his cuirass, and wounded him in the breast; the other tore away three fingers of his left hand, and he fell without a cry, but with a heavy groan, while his lieutenant, old Martin of that Ilk, assumed his place.

"This, to avenge thee, Balcomie," said he, discharging the cannon, and unhorsing a cavalier, whose bright armour and waving plumage made him dangerously conspicuous above the dense mass of Spaniards who were swarming over the stockades, and lowering their ladders into the now almost empty fosse.

"Well done, stout Martin!" said Dunbar, brandishing his sword; "to thy cannon again, and give me another good shot—another like that for the Queen of Bohemia! Down with that tall fellow in the gilt armour! Cocksails, man!—he may be Carlstein himself! Down with the Black Eagle, and down with the Cross of Burgundy! Load with cartridge shot my cannoniers, and sweep the stockade; sweep, my comrades, and be stanch as your swords of steel. Ah! pikes and pistols—my poor Martiz—and thou, too?" he added, as a ball from a falconet passed through the head of the old lieutenant, and killed him on the spot: he was the last of the Martins of that Ilk, a good old family ruined in the affair of the Spanish Blanks, since when he had fed himself with the blade of his sword among the Scottish bands in Bohemia, or elsewhere.

It was frightful! Poor Martin's brains flew over me, and, half blinded, I wiped them off my face with my scarf; while, enraged by the loss of two favourite officers (though Lowlanders), our clansmen redoubled their energies, and thus the din increased as the smoke and slaughter deepened around us.

Brightly the evening sun was shining on the blue water and green banks of the Elbe; but enveloped in the white cloud of war, inspired with ferocity, and bent on carnage and destruction, we saw nothing but the enemy and our dying comrades, who every moment fell heavily down in their accoutrements, bleeding and in agony, or stone dead, as the fated shot might strike them; but closing up, shoulder to shoulder, the little band of survivors stood firm on the parapet ready to repel the assault; for still the Danish flag was flying on the colour-staff, and still the Scottish cross was streaming on the rampart. We—the officers—fought side by side with our musketeers, till our mustaches were all matted by the wet powder of bitten cartridges, and our shoulders ached with the exertion of incessant firing, while the barrels of our muskets became so hot that there was eminent danger in recharging them; yet still we toiled on. And now came the crisis; for though three successive storming parties had been swept away, our ammunition began to fail, and, as the bandoliers emptied, our fire slackened, and then the Spaniards and Austrians—pikemen, halberdiers, and musketeers, all mingled pell-mell—led by officers having pistols in their belts, and swords, daggers, and demi-lances, poured into the ditch; rushing down their ladders, and planting them against the wall, they swarmed up its face in hundreds.

Sheathed in brilliant armour, magnificently inlaid with gold, having his visor closed, a sword in his right hand and a poniard in his left, which also grasped a light rondelle or buckler, the tall and stately Count of Carlstein, wearing above his gorget the Golden Fleece and the White Eagle, led the forlorn hope.

"Victoria! Victoria!" we heard him crying. "Forward, forward! swords and pikemen!"

"Sancta Maria!" replied his soldiers, in a thousand varying tones uniting in one roar; "Sancta Maria! Vivat—vivat!" and that wild cry of the Austrians was echoed by the wilder hurrah of a regiment of Croats, who had leaped from their white horses, and were levelling their long carbines at us, point-blank over their saddles, with deadly precision. As the foe approached I looked at Ian. With his eyes flashing under the peak of his helmet, and both hands clenched on the hilt of his claymore, he was surveying the scene below with stern calmness. Phadrig Mhor, with a Lochaber axe, stood by his side, and the M'Farquhars, with their empty muskets clubbed, stood grimly in their ranks. They were a dark, a savage, and picturesque group.

"You see, my cousin," said Ian, in that grim jesting tone which he could assume at times, "that King Christian has resolved we shall pay dearly for declining the Danish cross. We shall all find our graves by the shore of the Elbe."

"Ye say truth, M'Farquhar," said Dunbar, as he pressed to the front with a partisan in his hand, and a pair of pistols in his belt; "but if ever we have a Hegisippus to relate our story, he shall never, like a lying loon, have it to say that we feared the face of man. But that king, whose life was saved by the Scottish Rittmaster Hume, on the day he fled from the battle of Lutter, should have remembered that trifling circumstance; and also that his sister had the honour to be queen of fair Scotland. But bide ye—hark!"

Above the uproar in the trench below us, the fire of the Croatian calivers, and the shouts of the stormers, we heard the clang of a horse's hoofs on a paved street, and saw a cavalier lightly armed, galloping in mad haste across the bridge of the Elbe, and in three seconds he dashed into the heart of the sconce amongst us.

"The Baron Karl of Klosterflord, aide-de-camp to the king!" exclaimed Ian and others.

"Herr Dunbar," said he, breathlessly, "you are to abandon the sconce, spike the cannon if you cannot bring them off, blow up the bridge of the Elbe, and retire to Lauenburg or Glückstadt."

"Tis too late, baron—these orders have come too late to save us," replied Dunbar, as hand to hand we met the Imperialists, hewing them from their ladders with swords and halberds, thrusting them down at push of pike into the fosse, where many of them, by falling head foremost, perished miserably among the mud and sap below.

Right in the gorge of our embrasure stood the Count of Carlestein, fighting with sword and buckler against Ian, whose powerful form overtopped the foe, though he could not stand erect while swaying his two-handed sword. Their soldiers pressed on behind them, and deadly was the strife at that point; for against it the enemy were pouring all their strength and fury. Save an occasional pistol-shot, the din was occasioned alone by the cries of the combatants, and the clash of their weapons, steel sparkling on steel; and nothing could surpass the bravery of Count Carlestein and his Spaniards, but that of Ian Dhu and his company.

Hurled over each other in whole sections by our levelled pikes, we rolled them into the ditch; but other sections came up in their places, and their cries rent the air.

"Viva Ferdinand! A Dios! à Cristo y al Espiritu Santo, gloria y gracias! Victoria! Victoria!" For lack of powder our men hurled sand, earth, and stones, right into their faces, and Phadrig Mhor hewed away with his pole-axe like a mower in a ripe clover-field.

Amid this dense mass in the embrasure, while pikes were crashing, swords ringing, and colours flying, swaying to and fro—now on this side, and now on that—many frightful wounds were given and received. Ian's right knee, being bare and unprotected, was drenched in blood from a stab, which raised his Highland blood to the boiling pitch, and, by one headlong stroke, he hurled the count, as if he had been a mere puppet, into the heart of the ditch; but his place was immediately supplied by another cavalier wearing the Imperial scarf, and carrying in one hand a demi-pike, in the other a banner with the Black Eagle.

With one foot on a culverin, and the other on the cope of the parapet, during this *mêlée* I was handling my half-pike so prominently, that I was the mark of many a bullet, but escaped them all, though receiving innumerable bruises. While he fought with others, the sword of my noble cousin shred off many a pike-head, and broke down many a sword, which menaced *me*; for, like wight Wallace of old, it was no uncommon event for Ian Dhu to encounter four men at once, and knock them all on the head in succession, aiding his friends the while by many a casual thrust and blow.

In this desperate and destructive struggle, their native strength and skill in the use of their weapons, together with their lofty position, gave our bare-kneed warriors an immense superiority over the Spanish or Austrian stormers; but it was evident that, step by step, by main force of numbers, they would drive us into the heart of the place, where we would infallibly be all cut to pieces or taken. Major Wilson, Sir Patrick Mackay, Culcraigie, Kildon, M'Coll of that Ilk, and others, all fought valiantly in their own ranks; and it was a glorious sight to see so many brave Scottish cavaliers, all handling sword and pike as if they had come into the world with harness on their backs.

But, meanwhile, where was old Dunbar? for he, who usually was in the thickest of every fray, was not now in the front with his two-handed cliobh. Our soldiers, who soon missed him, were beginning to lose heart, and cried repeatedly—

“A Dunbar! a Dunbar!”

“I am here, my comrades! Ah, pikes and pistols—clear the way!” replied the sturdy veteran, as he sprang into the embrasure, and hurled among the assailants something which seemed to me like an immense hoop.

It was enveloped in light smoke, and became covered with flames as it fell among the dense masses of armed men in the graff below; a sudden yell arose from thence, and an immediate panic followed.

This wary old veteran, who had served with Camp-Marshal Hepburn and Sir Andrew Gray in Bohemia, and with Count

Mansfeldt in Flanders, in expectation of an assault, had prepared a *couronne foudroyante*, which was composed of four iron hoops, bound together with wire, and studded by loaded pistol barrels, crackers, pointed pieces of iron, glass bottles filled with powder, and bunches of grenades (those notable inventions of 1574), the whole being covered with tarred and oiled flax, which wreathed the hoops with fire as they rolled, a blazing and exploding mass, among the stormers. The barrels of the pistols, which were loaded to the muzzle, as they became red-hot, vomited their leaden contents everywhere; the bottles of powder burst, and the grenades exploded, scattering death and mutilation as their showers of splintered iron, stones, and nails were driven among the shrinking storming party, which fled in every direction up the ladders, over the stockades, and to the farthest ends of the ditch. For five minutes the panic was general; but those five minutes saved the soldiers of Dunbar, who cut and destroyed the scaling-ladders.

A hoarse shout for vengeance burst from the foe. Led on again by the Count and the cavalier with the black eagle, the Imperialists poured in thousands into the ditch; but before fresh ladders were planted upon those corpse-strewn heaps which filled it, and before the infuriated pikemen had gained the summit of the parapet, we had drawn back our twenty brass culverins, traced the horses to them, and retired in double-quick time by the bridge.

In close ranks, with pikes sloped and muskets trailed, the three hundred Highlanders who survived crossed the Elbe; and the horses galloping at full speed, drew the heavy culverins over the broad arches with the sound of thunder. Holding his startled charger by the bridle, Dunbar stood near the tinket of the sconce to spring the mine the moment the last of us were passed. The M'Farquhars were the last who retired.

"The colours—the standard! Ensign Rollo, you have left your colours behind!" cried the old man in a furious tone; "they are still flying on the parapet, within arm's length of the enemy."

Thunderstruck by his words, I paused irresolutely.

"God's death!" he cried passionately; "the Imperialists have never yet gained one from our Scottish bands, and shall the first be taken from the regiment of Strathnaver? Pikes and pistols!—at the risk of your life, youngster, bring off that standard, or die under it."

He levelled a pistol at me; but at that time I scarcely heard all he said, as I rushed back to the bastion, where in the hurry of bringing off the cannon we had left St. Andrew's cross flying. The Austrians were indeed within arm's-length; a storm of

bullets swept around me, as I tore it down and sprang after my comrades, followed by a swarm of Imperialists, who now poured over the undefended rampart like a living flood.

Closely pursued by a volley of oaths and bullets, I ran towards the bridge of the Elbe, and had almost reached the *tête-du-pont*, when, lo! the arches rocked beneath my feet, there was a tremendous explosion, with a broad blaze of lurid light, and then a cloud of darkness, dust, and stones arose before me, and I knew not whether I was in the clouds or on the earth, as the mine was sprung; and the great centre arch blown into the air. Like the shower of a volcano, the *débris* descended upon the crystal current of the Elbe. Before me, a deep chasm yawned between the ruined piers; behind me, were the fierce Imperialists! On the opposite ruin stood Dunbar, still grasping his restive horse by the bridle.

"I could not help it, Rollo," he cried; "better that one should be lost than all!"

I thought my heart would burst under its band of steel; but tearing the silken colour from its staff, and placing a stone within it, I flung it across to Dunbar. He snatched it up, sprang into his saddle, and galloped after the retiring Highlanders, who had now disappeared in the silent streets of Boitzenburg.

Though encumbered by my back, breast, and head pieces, my heavy tartan kilt and accoutrements, my first thought was to spring into the river and swim it, as I had often swum the Dee and Don; but a bullet, almost spent, struck my head. The good steel cap prevented it from piercing my brain, but I sank on the spot, and felt the ruin crumbling under me, as, with one arm overhanging the water, I lay upon the fragment of the bridge.

I remember no more.

CHAPTER XX.

RUPERT-WITH-THE-RED-PLUME.

I LAY long insensible, concealed by a mound of rubbish which the explosion of the bridge had thrown up between me and the scone, where the fierce Croats and savage Spaniards had barbarously slain all our poor wounded men, and thrown them into the river; for the first objects which appeared when sense returned, were several corpses in dark green tartan floating on the surface of the Elbe almost below me, and in the yellow flush with which the setting sun tinged the broad river. Many of these bodies were half stripped by those infamous women who followed the Imperialists in such numbers, and who found an

unwonted prize in the silver brooches and jewelled bodgags of the Highland soldiery.

"Oh cursed bigotry, and accursed ambition!" thought I, when reflecting on these horrors; for ambition had produced the war of aggression, and religious bigotry had inflamed the minds of the enemy, and urged them to that atrocious pitch of cruelty, of which the sack of Magdeburg was an example so terrible! I was about to stagger up to seek a draught of water—for the agony I endured from thirst cannot be written—when a heavy hand was laid upon me, and a somewhat familiar voice said—

"If you would escape death, lie still as if you were dead."

I looked up, and in the splendidly-armed cavalier who addressed me, recognised by his military orders the great Count of Carlstein, and by his voice that Imperialist who had bestowed on me the golden chain, and from whom I had received the flag of truce.

"Lie still," he continued, hurriedly, "till nightfall, at least, and then I will have you conveyed away. I had an order from Tilly to put all to the sword in forcing a passage here, and his orders must be obeyed by all who receive them. Feign death, if you would escape."

Unable to reply, I sank again, and how long I remained so, I have not the least idea; but, when aroused fully, I found myself on horseback, and supported on the saddle on one side by a gentleman in bright armour; on the other, by a man in the Celtic garb of my own regiment. The whole landscape swam around me, but I perceived that there was a brilliant moon shining; that the Elbe with its ruined bridge lay on my right, and yellow fields, with rustling trees and green hedges, extended to the left. A mouthful of brandy and water revived me, and I said to the soldier—

"Who are you?"

"Dandy Dregghorn, sir, of puir Captain Learmonth's company," he replied, and then I recognised him as one of the Low Country pikemen, of whom we had a few in the regiment, from the counties on the Highland border.

"And how did you escape?"

"By feigning mysel stane deid, sir, sae they just dookit me in the Elbe; but I could swim like a cork, and hid myself among the green rashes till this gentleman saved me. Oh, sir, it was an awesome butchery! mair than forty gallant fellows, who were sairly wounded, shot deid, or hacked to pieces by knives and whingers, and flung into the river. If ever I spare an Imperialist after this night o' bluid, my name is no Dandy Dregghorn!"

"And where are we going—why in this direction?"

"To a house that I wot of, not far from this," replied the

gentleman, who had a large red plume in his helmet; "there, orders have been given to convey you."

The country became more woody as we proceeded, and the moonlit road wound past various lonely tarns, overgrown by broad-leaved plants and water-lilies; the deep water on which they floated, being rendered yet darker by the shade of many an aged oak. After a pause, I said—

"From whom have you orders concerning me?"

"The Count of Carlstein," replied the stranger.

"That ferocious butcher! Then I am hopelessly a prisoner."

"That depends upon the count," he replied, laughing; "but I am sorry you should have such a bad opinion of him."

"Pardon me, sir," said I, checking the bridle of the horse; "what have I permitted myself to say? I now perceive that you are the count himself!"

Dandy started on hearing this; but the count—for it was indeed he—smiled and said—

"I thought you would soon recognise me."

"Good Heaven! you are a Scotsman, and yet can butcher your own countrymen thus!"

"I do not butcher them," he replied, in a broken voice; "they defended that bridge after a fair warning of what they might expect if the fort was stormed, and bravely have they fought, leaving it without one cannon lost or colour taken. Besides, sir, please to remember that I am not the only Scotsman who serves the Emperor. We have more than one regiment of our countrymen, and many a Scottish commander, in the army of the Empire."

"And why is this?"

"Because, like myself, they are all true Catholics, and serve the Catholic League, whose princes are pledged to exterminate Protestantism. And yet, sir, I was not always a Catholic. I remember well when I toddled at my poor mother's apron to our village kirk at home; I remember its time-worn arches, the pointed windows and the gloomy pews; I can remember the venerable minister, with his thin haffets and lyart pow, his benignant face and smooth Geneva bands; I remember the deep religious awe with which I lent my little voice to swell the choral psalm, and heard him expound who in his youth had heard Knox preach and Spottiswoode declaim! I can remember the grave, attentive faces of the congregation; the laced lairds and plaided shepherds, the young girls who have now become grandmothers, and the old people who are now in their graves—rest them, God!—ay, graved in Scottish earth, where I may never lie. Yes—

I can remember the day when I was a stanch Presbyterian, would have looked—like you—with horror on the Cross and

Eagle of the Empire. But if you knew all that I owe to the Church of Rome, you might pardon me for having rushed into its arms. Early in life, my misfortunes—it matters not what they were, or how they came about—made me, with others, a slave in Barbary. There I remained for five long years. Oh! what years these were, of hardship and repining; of toil and stripes; of hunger and mortification; of pain of body and agony of mind! Yet no effort was made by our countrymen in Scotland to relieve us, though we were numerous—gentlemen, seamen, and merchants—chained together like felons or wild beasts. . . . As Christian men—though Scots, heretics, and Presbyterians—ten of us were redeemed from slavery by the poor monks of the blessed Order of Redemption. Those true servants of God brought us to the Italian shore, and there upon the sands of Porto Fino, just where the Levanter landed us, on our knees we vowed to fight for that religion which had saved us from a life that was worse than a thousand deaths. We joined the army of the Emperor Ferdinand II.—ten of us—all privates in a troop of Lindesay's Scottish Reitres. We fought against the Elector Frederick, against Mansfeldt, old Sir Andrew Gray, and the Margravine of Anspach; hewing our way through Lusatia, Upper Austria, and the Palatinate of Bohemia. The storming of Frankenthal saw the ninth of my comrades slain, and me a captain; the siege of Bergen-op-Zoom saw me a colonel of pikes. I was sergeant-major di battaglia under Don Gonzales de Cordova in Hainault, and am now Camp Master-general and Count of Carlstein, Lord of Geizer and Koningratz, under the Black Eagle. I believe, young gentleman, you will acknowledge that I owe these old monks of Redemption much; for I should have waited long enough, if I had tarried until some of our Scottish ministers came to Barbary to release me, to heal my scars and break my fetters. But enough of these prosy explanations," he added, loftily, haughtily—almost fiercely; "I have saved your lives, when I might have left you both to your fate. Taunt me not with the loss of those poor fellows at Boitzenburg—for they had a fair warning to march off without firing a shot, or being fired on—to withstand an assault and risk extermination."

"May I ask to what family you belong, and what is your Scottish name, Sir Count?"

"I belong to a family that never regretted my loss, so I disown it," he replied, bitterly. "The Imperialists call me *Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume*; but what is your name, and who are your family?"

"Like your own, Count, my family were not much distressed by my departure; so their name matters little—their memory less; but our Highlandmen call me Philip M'Combich, which means Philip, the son of *my friend*."

The Count laughed at this mode of retorting upon his reserve, saying—

“ Well, well, let us each keep our little secrets ; but here we are arrived at last. This is my temporary chateau, and a very comfortable one you will find it.”

With their copper vanes glittering in the moonlight, the high-pointed and old-fashioned gables of a hall now appeared above some thick copsewood. Entering an avenue of old beech-trees, we were alternately in light and shadow as we passed their ivied stems ; we came to a broad fosse full of long reeds and wild water-plants, chiefly floating lilies, and over this we passed by an old and moss-green bridge of stone, at the end of which was an archway surmounted by armorial bearings, which proved afterwards to be those of my friend, the Baron Karl of Klosterfiord, one of whose mansions on the Luneburg side of the Elbe had been appropriated by the Imperialists as the quarters of the Count of Carlstein and a troop of Reitres, whose horses were stabled in all the lower apartments where the doors would admit them.

The vast and irregular façade of the old chateau, with its broad balconies, its steeple-like turrets and indented gables, was bathed in white moonlight ; a number of noisy and half-armed soldiers thronged the courts, or played at dice and shovel-board, over cans of German beer, in the stone chambers on the ground-floor, where they burned large fires on the tessellated pavement, and recklessly were never in want of fuel, while doors, windows, and furniture lasted.

As we entered the court, two young ladies in light-coloured dresses appeared at the upper balcony, and waved their handkerchiefs to the Count, whom I immediately concluded to be as gay as other generals of Ferdinand II. I was surprised, however, at not seeing more of the fair sex, for a vast number followed the soldiers of the Catholic League ; and there are several instances of their garrisons, which, on obtaining permission to march out with the honours of war, brought away more women than men—death-hunters and ammunition-wives. In morality, the Imperialists formed a strong contrast to the armies of the Protestant champions, Christian of Denmark and Gustavus of Sweden, who would not permit camp-followers of any description to hang upon the skirts of their forces.

Under their black iron helmets, the tipsy Reitres of Carlstein savagely eyed poor Dandy Dreghorn, who kept close by my side as we crossed the quadrangle to the door of the vestibule, where the Count kindly assisted me to dismount, and gave me his arm to lean upon when ascending the stair. Dandy was following us only, when the Count desired a grey-haired lance-speasade of his troop, whom he called Gustaf Spürriedter, to “ take him

among the soldiers, and be answerable for his safety and comfort, limb for limb—and body for body.”

We entered a brilliantly-lighted room, where a magnificent supper was laid, with covers for three; it was waiting for the Count, towards whom the young ladies sprang with a cry of joy, and embraced him—

“My daughters,” said he; “Ensign Mac—upon my word, I forget your name!”

I bowed, and tottered to a seat, for the effect of my contusion, and the ride on horseback over a villanous road, were telling severely upon me now.

I could only perceive that one lady was very dark, that the other was fair, and that both looked kindly and pityingly upon me.

“Off with his helmet, girls!” said the count, “and bring him a cup of wine.”

I felt my steel cap removed; then a deluge of warm blood spread over my eyes, and blinded me. A cry burst from the young ladies.

“Poor boy!” I heard the count saying; “poor boy! Ho, Gustaf Spürledter—away with him to bed—quick there below!”

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FAIR HAIR AND THE DARK HAIR.

THE sun, as it shone upon my eyes next morning, awoke me. I started, gazed around, and sunk again, for I struggled with a dreamy sense of pain and oppression. I was not in a bivouac, lying on the hard earth with a sword for a pillow and a plaid for my covering, but on a bed of the softest down; and the glance I had given revealed to me a tapestried room, the hangings of which were old and dark, representing huntsmen in the antique German costume of the fourteenth century, antlered deer peeping from among the leaves, and large Danish hounds in the foreground. The warmth of the sunshine was playing on my cheek, and the fragrance of a thousand flowers, with the merry notes of the birds as they sang their summer songs, came through an open window, wafted on the breeze together—music and perfume. I heard the murmur of a distant cascade, and the foliage rustling on the old oaks, the yellow linden-trees, and copper beeches.

The furniture of the apartment was rich and luxurious; but, as all was confusion in my mind, for a time I forgot how it came to pass that I was there, and still imagined myself at the fort

of Boitzenburg. I saw the stately forms of Ian Dhu and Phadrig Mhor, of Learmonth and Dunbar, as they hewed down the Imperial escalade. I still heard the din of the conflict, the war-cry of the Spaniards—the wild slogan of the Highlanders, and the wilder yells of the Croatian horsemen; and then I gave a convulsive start to find myself in a comfortable bed, which suggested ideas of Craigrollo, and the college of James IV. Thus, when again I dozed, the old familiar features of my home passed before me—those scenes whose solemn grandeur makes, on the mind of the young mountaineer, that lively and peculiar impression which the denizen of a flat country cannot conceive; and thus, on that feverish couch, many a face and many a dream of other days floated before me.

Near my father's house there flowed a linn—a deep, dark linn, where the *wee burnie* poured over a ledge of rock; it was crossed by a large stone, and I remember the time when that brigstane was quite a bridge to me. I seemed to hear the murmur of the linn and the rustle of my paternal woods, and saw the white blossoms of the sweet-scented hawthorn birks that grew beneath the old tower wall. I heard the bleat of the sheep that browsed upon my father's hills; the rich perfume of the purple heather, and of the bells of that beautiful broom, from which the sweetest honey is gathered by the mountain bee, were wafted towards me. I heard my mother's gentle voice, but it seemed to come from a vast distance on the drowsy hum of summer, and all my soul was stirred within me. I was a child again, and I wept in my sleep like the lonely boy I was. I wept, but I knew not why, unless it were that through these tender visions there came an oppressive sense of their unreality. The past conflicted with the present, and I felt that I was far away from those dear hills of Cromartie, from the shores of their blue Firth, and the dusky peaks of the Black Isle—sick, weary, and wounded—a stranger in the land of the stranger and foe. Oh! I may be pardoned in thinking that no heart like the heart of the Scot and the Switzer feel that dire loneliness when so far from home; and none like they are haunted by the strange, sad fear, of being buried far from the graves of their kindred. Yet how many of our brave Scottish hearts have mouldered into dust on the plains of Flanders and Germany; by the shores of the Elbe and the Oder, the Rhine and the Danube, the Zoom and the Zuiderzee!

When again I unclosed my eyes and gazed between the parted hangings of the bed, I perceived two young ladies at the foot of the apartment. They were conversing in a low tone, and placing flowers in a large vase. They were the daughters of the Count; but as ladies have the privilege of giving the first invitation among us in Scotland, and as their presence in my

apartment might be a mistake, I waited until they should address me.

I observed that one was a fair girl, clad in that pale blue silk which so well becomes persons of her complexion; but the elder and the taller of the two, a beautiful girl with jetty hair, was dressed in orange-coloured satin, a tint which so well consorted with her dark hair and fine complexion. You would have loved the youngest, had you seen her face, there was such a sweet expression in its pretty mouth and dove-like eyes; but the eldest—her form was beautiful, her features irreproachable, her profile was noble, and the freshness and delicacy of her complexion were remarkable. Her fashion of dress, her air, her mode of holding up her head, had something more of gentle blood in them than her sister; and though it would have been difficult to find two more lovely girls, each after her own style—the eldest seemed to be the proudest pet of nature.

"He seems to be still asleep, Gabrielle," said the dark beauty; "but uneasily—for I have heard him moan."

"Hush—you will wake him—how loud you do talk, Ernestine!"

So, one is called Gabrielle, and the elder is Ernestine, thought I. Such pretty names these are—and they speak German, too! I would have sworn Ernestine was a Spaniard, but her black hair has come with her Scottish blood.

Having completed their arrangement of the vase, they approached, placed it on a little tripod table near me, and softly drew back one of the rich curtains of the bed. I felt very much inclined to laugh.

"Poor young man!" said Ernestine; "he is smiling in his sleep."

I endeavoured to assume a look of the most charming candour.

"His hair is dark and curly," said Gabrielle.

"He reminds me somewhat of poor Lerma, who was slain at Lütter."

I heard Gabrielle sigh.

She has lost a lover at that unlucky battle, thought I, and was in some degree correct; for these fair girls had many lovers, but they had never distinguished any, save one, the gallant young Conde de Lerma, son of the Spanish duke of that name, to whom Gabrielle had been betrothed at an age which was too tender to possess any other love than such as a brother might have for a sister; and like a brother the boy count had loved his little wife; but a cannon-ball had decapitated him at Lütter in the moment of victory, and there was an end of it. Gabrielle had wept for the loss of her young friend—Lerma had been

nothing more—and she still retained his betrothal ring on the fourth finger of her right hand.

"Oh yes!" said she; "he is just like Lerma."

"With the same amount of mustache," added Ernestine.

"Lerma had less—but he was so young."

My hand lay upon the coverlet, and, with her soft warm hand, Ernestine touched it gently by chance.

"He is hot and feverish—we must be very kind to him, Gabrielle. Poor boy!"

The touch of Ernestine's hand made my heart vibrate; but I remembered Prudentia, and resolved to steel my heart against all soft impressions and nonsense for the future.

She is very beautiful and charming, of course, thought I; but let me beware how I fall lightly into that troublesome trap again.

Now, reflecting that it was unfair, by a seeming sleep, to impose upon them thus, I made preparations to *awake*, on which they let the hangings drop, and glided noiselessly to some distance.

On my drawing back the curtain, they both approached me again, and Gabrielle, who possessed either less pride or more frankness than Ernestine, asked me, with the most winning kindness, "How I was," and bade me "good-morning."

I replied that the pain of my bruise was gone, that a little giddiness remained; but that I suffered greatly from thirst.

On hearing this they hurried to a side table, and in a minute returned with a silver salver, bearing some warm refreshment, of which I partook because it was offered by the white jewelled hand of Gabrielle, though I would have given the world for a cup of pure cold water.

"I am too much honoured by such attendance—I beseech you to retire, and send to me the soldier, my fellow-prisoner. I recognise in you the daughters of the count, who so kindly saved me, when our wounded—poor souls!—were so mercilessly slaughtered at Boitzenburg yesterday."

"Our father has desired us alone to attend you, and, as his countryman, we quite love you already," said the frank Gabrielle, with one of her delightful smiles; "you can have no other attendants save us, or Corporal Spürledter, and perhaps the soldier who accompanies you."

"Honest Dandy Dreghorn?"

"But both you and he," added the graver and statelier Ernestine, "must remain concealed closely; for, as Count Tilly will be here in the course of to-morrow, to explain reasons for our request were a needless task."

"Tilly!" I reiterated, giving a convulsive start, and glancing out for my claymore and bield, on hearing the name of that

terrible leader of the great crusade against the Protestants of Germany and the liberties of Northern Europe. "If Tilly is to pass this way, then Dandy and I have been too long here, for to the Protestant soldiers of Christian IV. he shows such mercy as a cat shows to mice. Ah! he is a merciless old savage, and will shoot us as a mere matter of course."

"John of Tserclä, the Count Tilly, is general of all the armies of the Empire!" said Ernestine proudly, and with an air of pique.

"Ah! sister, but he is very cruel," urged Gabrielle, gently.

"Yet fear nothing, sir; my father's influence will protect, and our care conceal you. Simply, he thinks it better or safer that Tilly should *not* know you are here."

"But take the nice little breakfast we have prepared for you," said the childlike Gabrielle; "to-morrow you will be stronger, and we shall all talk more together."

Ernestine stood, for she seemed all unused to stoop; but Gabrielle knelt down by the side of the low bed, and, holding before me the silver salver, gave me a green crystal cup containing a certain alimentary infusion named coffee, which was to be taken warm and sweetened with Canary sugar, which, like the beverage itself, was then a luxury unknown among us in Scotland. I have since been told, by those cavaliers of our army who were taken prisoners at Worcester, that this coffee has been introduced into England by a person named Pasqua, a Greek, who came to London in 1650, with a Turkish merchant named Edwardes, and who sold it at his shop in Lombard-street, as a medicated restorative for the sick. Never having tasted anything of this kind before, I felt so wonderfully refreshed and invigorated by one cup, that I was easily prevailed on to take a second, with a little biscuit of honey and flour.

I thanked these two beautiful girls politely and sincerely, and, after the hardships endured by us since leaving Itzhoe, could not help expressing my sense of the luxuries with which they had surrounded me.

"You owe us no thanks for that, sir," said the proud Ernestine; "this house is as much yours as ours, being so by the right which the chance of war gives us over everything that comes in our way. We accompany our father's column of the Imperial army, and, as he always selects a pretty house for us, I hope you approve of his taste. This mansion belongs to the Baron of Klosterford, an officer of Danish pistoliers."

"He is my good friend, and a brave soldier!"

"But a Protestant," said Gabrielle, quietly.

"And consequently a foe of ours," said the other beautiful Imperialist, shaking back her dark curls.

"Never mind, sister," added Gabrielle, laughing; "a month hence our dear father may select apartments for us in the castle of Copenhagen."

"Your father never will, lady," said I, piqued at her words; "for there are too many of our tough Scottish blades to keep the passes of the Elbe against both the pride and the power of the Empire."

"Here our father comes, and he will best tell you the chances of that," replied Ernestine.

At that moment I heard a horse ridden rapidly into the quadrangle; then the clank of spurs and the jarring of a long sword, as a cavalier dismounted, entered the vestibule, and approached the room where I lay, and from whence the two young ladies hurried to meet him.

Book the Fourth.

CHAPTER XXII.

DANDY DREGHORN.

AFTER a few minutes' delay, the count entered alone. He was armed just as I had seen him yesterday, and appeared somewhat jaded and fatigued.

"Ah, my friend and countryman! I have again the honour to salute you," said he, seating himself by my bedside. "A thousand cannonades! how well you are looking this morning! you will be with your regiment in a week. Ah, that fine regiment!—King Christian's *Invincibles*, we call them now. But say, have these lasses, my daughters, been kind to you?"

"Kind as sisters."

"Right! for every soldier—more especially a Scottish soldier—should be their brother, as he is mine, when off the battle-field. The girls are warm-hearted, for they have been reared, not in courts and cities, among the parasites of kings and slaves of fashion; but in camps and garrisons, among frank soldiers and generous hearts—the gallant Austrians and daring Croats; and all they inherit of old Scotland comes from me. I have been twice married, my dear boy. The mother of Ernestine was a Spanish lady of Flanders; the mother of Gabrielle, as you may see by her blooming cheek and fair hair, was of Hainault—'Hainault the Valiant!' hence the name of Gabrielle. They are two pretty pets; I love my dear girls, but think, at times, I would rather they had been boys, that they might have fought for the Catholic faith, and transmitted my hard-won title to posterity. At other times," continued the count, who seemed in high spirits and in a talking humour, "I am seized with sore longings to see Old Scotland again—to see my father's tower, the blue waters, the purple mountains, and the pine-woods of my native place. But I was a younger son. I have made me a new name, a new fame, and patrimony of my own; I have hewn them out by my sword, and fenced them round by gallant deeds. I will never again have to enact the sornor or the trencherman at the hall-table of a kinsman, or stoop to eat a vassal's bread, though given by an elder brother, when here I am lord of three manors, Carlstein, Geiz:

and Kœningratz, and camp-master of horse, under the Emperor. Yet my heart bled yesterday at the slaughter of my poor countrymen! Would to God they came crowding to the banners of Ferdinand, as they now crowd in tens of thousands to those of Gustavus Adolphus and his rival, King Christian; of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and that prince of cowards, Frederick Guelph, the Elector-Palatine! Then, indeed, the northern war would end without a blow."

"Yet all your sympathy did not save our poor wounded men from massacre at Boitzenburg."

"Tilly's orders were most stringent—to put all to the sword who resisted, that a terror might be stricken into others, and the Elbe abandoned. You do not know Tilly; his orders never bear but one construction. We knew quite well that Dunbar had but five hundred Highlanders in yonder sconce. We will never lack for information while that sharp fellow Bandolo lives."

"Bandolo?" I repeated, thinking of Prudentia, the dancer, and endeavouring to recollect something else; "I have surely heard that name before."

"Thus I was ordered at all risks to force the bridge of Boitzenburg, because it was your weakest point, and strengthened only by your sconce, mounted by twenty guns, which Bandolo undertook to have spiked the night before."

"That sconce was an effort of poor Learmonth's skill; but has there been any fighting elsewhere?"

"I have not heard; but this I know, that Christian IV. struggles in vain to keep us on this side of the Elbe; for we will soon build boats, or by storming the bridges force a passage, and everywhere enter Holstein."

"Since you are so well informed, count, perhaps you can acquaint me where my comrades have marched to?"

"I cannot;—to-morrow our prince of spies will return from the Danish side of the river, and Tilly will meet him here; we shall then know more about them. But I implore you to keep out of the way of the generalissimo, for otherwise I could neither be answerable for your liberty or safety."

"Ah! then you do not mean to keep me a prisoner?" said I, with sudden joy.

"A prisoner!—how could you think so? No, no; only till you are well, when we must find some means of transmitting you to the Danish army, which by that time will be in full retreat."

"Then, count, I mean to be quite well to-morrow; and surely King Christian will not retreat by that time?"

"You shall not leave us so soon. When I was taken prisoner at the battle of Duneberg, Colonel Sir John Hepburn, of Athel-
reford, kept me for three weeks in his own tent before he

would let me return. But now, you must excuse me ; to see you I have just stolen a few minutes, and am compelled to return to where my head-quarter force is cantoned, for the whole army is closing up towards the Elbe. Meantime, I leave you to the care of old Spürrledter and my daughters."

"Will they not be alarmed by your departure?"

"Nay, nay ; they have been used to see me go and come in my armour for many a year. They have more than once seen me brought home shoulder-high upon a door, with a bullet through my body ; and more than twice have seen my horse Bellochio come home, with no trace of his rider but the blood on his saddle-laps. Poor girls—they are so affectionate ! Gabrielle is quite a child, but Ernestine is more of a woman, and has considered herself one ever since she was three years old ; yet, with all her pride and reserve, she can at times be as gentle, as frank, and as playful as Gabrielle. Tilly will be here to-morrow, or next day at the farthest, and then we shall have warm work ; so, my young friend, until I see you again—farewell !"

The count retired, with his lofty red plume dancing above his embossed helmet, and his sword *Eisenhauer* (or Ironhewer), as it could cut both helmets and blades of steel, under his arm ; then I was left, for a time, to my reflections. About an hour afterwards I heard stealthy footsteps approaching ; the door of my chamber opened, and the broad, good-humoured Lowland face of Dandy Dreghorn—the same soldier whom we had gauntleted for his gluttony on the march—appeared, looking cautiously round the room. He had a large Dutch leather flask in one hand, a brown-ware pot in the other, and a loaf of bread under his arm. My helmet and cuirass, kilt, plaid, and other trappings, were lying upon a sofa ; and the moment he espied these items, which were indicative of my presence, he advanced more boldly, and overwhelmed me with questions about my wound, and noisy exclamations of joy at having discovered me.

"'Od, sir, I'm glad I've fund ye oot, for I had a sair job seeking ye through this muckle ark, from roof to grund stane, like a puir coo in an unco loan. Eh ! sir, that was an awfu' business at the Brig o' Boitzenburg ; what a sicht puir Fergus M'Vurich was, wi' the shot through his nose ! He was a grand piper that, and could blaw wi' his smooth fu' o' meal !"

"And how fares it with thee, honest Dandy?" said I, giving him my right hand.

"Ill eneuch, sir, Gude kens !" sighed Dandy, squatting himself upon the floor, placing the jar, the loaf, and the bottle between his legs, and unclasping an immense jockteleg knife ; "Ill eneuch ! for between that dour deevil, Corporal Spürrledter, and an auld besom o' a housekeeper, that maks a' alike unwelcome, I am weel

nigh starved; for they gied me naething for supper last nicht, and for breakfast this morning, but chappit cabbages."

"Cabbages?"

"Ay, sir, as I'm a leevin' man—chappit wi' pepper and vinegar, sic as at hame we wadna gie to a grumphy soo. 'What the deil's this?' said I to auld Spürrledter; '*Soor Craute*,' said he. 'Soor what?' said I. 'Soor Craute,' he roared out, with an oath like twa sneezes and a snort. 'The Lord hae a care o' me! is this the kind o' draff and dreg you German bodies eat?' 'Yaw,' said he, as he ladled a bowlfu' into his stomach like a kail-eating Grant o' Strathspey; 'and ver goot, too.' 'Does your billy o' an emperor eat kail-blades that way?' He nodded his grey pow, for he was owre fu' to speak. 'Preserve us a'—what a beast he maun be!' said I. The auld beggar lookit very like as if he wad hae stickit me, but I gloomed as if I didna care a brass bodle for him."

"So, then, you have neither had supper last night nor breakfast this morning?" said I, seeing that Dandy was cutting his third slice from the loaf, and was eating and speaking with equal rapidity.

"This will never do, I thocht; 'Keep your ain fish-guts for your ain seamaws, corporal,' said I; 'for before I will live on green kail-blades, or castocks either, I'll see you and your emperor baith ——.' I didna say damned, but I thocht it. I then gaed awa on the forage, and in a slee corner fand this braw pat o' honey, that bottle o' skeidam, and a loaf; then I came in search o' you, sir, for I feared ye might be faring on kail-blades too; and I ken they gang sair against the stomach, unless weel boiled with beef, and mustard conform thereto."

"Many thanks, good Dandy," said I, amused by this brave fellow's garrulity; I have already breakfasted, and have done so well."

"Then, sir, you'll let me mak mine beside ye, for the soond o' a Scots tongue is just like music to me, and gies me an appetite mairwre; for it gars me think o' the halesome breezes that blaw owre the green braes, the sweet-smelling heather, and the yellow corn-rigs at hame. My hail heart and my een fill when I think on hame!" and, flourishing his flask, Dandy began to sing,—

"Comin' thro' the Craigs o' Kyle,
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather,
There I met a blue-eyed lassie,
Keepin' a' her flock thegither.
Owre the muir amang the heather!
Owre the muir amang the heather!
There I met—"

"For Heaven's sake, Dreghorn, make less noise."

"Fule that I was!" continued Dandy, continuing his repast and his reflections together; "fule that I was ever to leave my plew, to follow the deil and the drum in the Danish wars—ay, a damned fule," he added emphatically, with moistened eyes, as he sliced away at the loaf, and with his jockteleg spread on the honey an inch thick, and took alternately a large circular mouthful and a draught from the leathern flask. He then drew an oak quaigh from his sporran, and, mixing the honey with the skeidam, said, "Will ye no tak a sup, sir? this is just like Athole brose. Here's to ye, sir, and may we baith be safe wi' Sir Donald in a day or twa; 'od, there's a gude Stirling pint left yet in the flask, and I'll just pouch it."

"Have you seen the count's daughters, Dandy?"

"Ay have I, Maister Rollo—twae saucy limmers, that laugh at me to my very face!"

"They are very handsome."

"Handsome—sune ripe, sune rotten! They couldna haud a candle to muirland Maggie at the Burnfit o' Drumlie."

"Animated by no love of glory, or desire for military fame, I cannot conceive, Dandy, what tempted you to leave your plough, and become a soldier."

"It's a lang story, sir," replied Dreghorn, with his mouth full; "but I can mak it short enough, if you'll promise never to tell ony o' our chields at the regiment; for then I wad hae to quit that, as I quat the parochin o' Drumlie."

"I pledge you my word, Dandy."

"Weel, ye maun ken, sir," continued the hungry Andrew, sighing as he spread the last of the honey on the last of the loaf, "I was a puir plew-lad, and bided wi' an unmarried aunty, an auld whaislin, wallydraigel deevil, that, because she had never gotten a gudeman, took it into her wise heid to turn witch. Noo, sir, whether she was a witch, or wasna a witch, I canna say; but she was auld enough, and ugly enough, for ane; for her hook neb and hairy chin met when she girmed, and her twa een were sunk a finger-length into her heid; but, my certie! they could look oot wickedly eneuch when I suppit owre muckle brose, stole her cream, or let her peas bannocks scouther on the girdle. I say again, sir, that, whether she had any dealings wi' the Auld Gentleman or no, I ken nocht, and noo I care nocht; but *this* I ken, that, as she never gaed to kirk or mercat, she sune got the wyte o' a' that gaed wrang in the country side."

"Well, Dandy, such as——"

"Enchanting millwheels, that stood stock-still one hour, and whirled the next as if the deil drave them; o' making toom yill-barrels dance in the browster's yard; o' croaking on lumheids

like a corbie, and yowling on the sclaits like a cat; o' gieing the Dominie the palsy, and the Precentor the pest, and causing ilka other ill that happened in the parish; o' putting the hail pains o' child-birth upon Jock Tamson, the ruling elder, whose gude-wife was safely delivered o' three bairns, while he, gudeman, was dancing and raving about his kailyard, thinking himself bewitched, as he was. She was accused o' raising up whirlwinds; o' dancing wi' the diel at the Nine-stane-rig, where he cam dressed like a Hielandman (as I am), with kilt and hose, and the Lord kens a' what mair, for she was like the colley wi' the ill name; until at last our minister, Maister Kittletext, when riding hame to the Manse on a munelicht nicht, frae a meeting o' the kirk-session, saw twa brigs at the burn o' Drumlie, and was weel nigh dooked to death by riding owre the wrang ane. Next morning, he swore before the sheriff, that frae the moment he passed our cottage he saw everything double, whilk was naething wonderfu' in him, when pricking his auld mear hame in the gloamin'; sae the session hauled my aunty before them, screwed her with the caspie claws, pricked her wi' pins, declared she was a witch, and burned her in the loan at the end o' the toun; and, aye cankered as she was to me, I grat like a wean when I saw the bleeze, as I sat about a mile off on the hill o' Drumlie, for in that bleeze the last o' a' my kith and kin was passing away. After this, the hail parochin misca'd me as a witch's kinsman, nane wad employ me; sea a mouthfu' o' meat, a sup o' kail, or a bite frae a bannock, wasna to be had. The men gloomed—the women gied me the gae-bye—the bairns pu'ed my plaid-neuk and cast stanes after me, till my life was weary. I grat wi' spite, and said, 'Deil tak the parish o' Drumlie, and a' that are in't! I'll turn sodjier, and march to Low Germanie'—and sae, sir, I am here"

Finding that he was wearying me, and that I was somewhat inclined to sleep, Dandy left me for the purpose of foraging for more vivres against the time of dinner, as he had a mortal aversion to having recourse to Corporal Spürrledter's basins of growte.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ERNESTINE AND GABRIELLE.

Two days' nursing at the hands of these charming girls made me almost well, and fit for service. The contusion on my head no longer gave me any pain; the scar closed, and grew hourly
 's under the soothing application of some essence or lotion

which they applied to it; and they were both so kind as to bring their work—for they were very industrious—into my room, where they sat, one on each side of my bed, and sewed, embroidered, read, or chatted with me. There was something sufficiently pleasing, and perplexing too, in being thus placed between two such beautiful young women—one with dark hair and large orient eyes; the other, with mild blue orbs and soft bright curls; both animated, laughing, brilliant, and full of wit and vivacity. To say the least of it, my position was very enviable.

Ernestine was dark, and tall and stately.

Gabrielle was less so, but fair and blooming; ever smiling, save when some recollection floated through her mind. Then she cast down her timid blue eyes and sighed.

Ernestine wore her long black hair, parted smoothly over her open brow, in broad and heavy braids.

Gabrielle permitted hers to float in loose ringlets, which displayed to the utmost advantage their bright golden colour.

Ernestine's deep dark eyes had usually a quiet and thoughtful expression; her sister's, though less attractive, possessed more vivacity. Ernestine had more pride, Gabrielle more frankness; and I know of no picture more beautiful than was presented by these two motherless sisters, whose home was the camp, when Gabrielle rested her fair head, with its shower of golden curls, upon the budding bosom and snowy shoulder of her more thoughtful, more contemplative, and more matron-like sister; their attitudes were so full of grace and affection.

Ernestine had the fire, the step, the glance, the dark eyes, and the dignity of Spain.

Gabrielle had the rich bloom and bright hair of her mother, the Hainaulter; but Ernestine, though she addressed me least, interested me most. In form she was finer than the most beautiful statue; her hands and arms were of the most pure and perfect form that a sculptor of the highest class could conceive; and yet, if I could make any distinction in their Samaritan attention to me, little Gabrielle was the kindest of the two. When comparing the calm, even, reserved, and well-bred style of their conversation, with the bold and forward manners of Prudentia, I felt nothing but anger and disgust at myself for having yielded so completely to her spells and her snares; and yet the beauty of that Spanish dancer was worthy of a higher sphere and better fate.

During these two days we became quite intimate, for under such circumstances friendship ripens rapidly; and hearing them addressing each other by their Christian names, I soon learned to do so likewise; but the regimental sobriquet (M'Combich),

by which I had introduced myself to the count, puzzled them sorely, and they styled me Herr *Kombeek*. The youngest requested that I should simply call her Gabrielle; but when I addressed the eldest so unceremoniously, she gave me at times one of her proud but quiet smiles. Her reserve piqued me a little, too.

"Lady Ernestine," said I, "why is Gabrielle so much more kind to me than you?"

"I am sorry you should think there is any difference," she replied, bending her dark eyes mildly, but inquiringly, upon me; "yet, perhaps, it may be so—she has a reason for being kind to a soldier, but I have none."

"And why does she never wear ornaments or gay colours—and is one moment so merry and the next so sad?"

"For the same reason."

"What may this reason be?"

"You are very inquisitive, Herr *Kombeek*," said Gabrielle, bending her blushing face over her embroidering frame.

"Twice I have observed her countenance fall when I spoke of the defeat at Lütter."

"Her betrothed fell in that *victory*," replied Ernestine; "she is quite a little widow. Hence the gravity that occasionally clouds her merry heart, and hence, perhaps, her kindness to you—a wounded soldier—for the sake of our lost friend; for the poor Conde de Lerma was scarcely ever on the footing of a lover. He considered his marriage as a thing that must take place, quite as a matter of course."

"And you, Ernestine, have you no lover in yonder camp to make you anxious for the chance of war?"

"Ah, yes! Herr *Kombeek*," said Gabrielle, clapping her hands; "question *her* a little now."

Ernestine replied only by one of her proud smiles, and adjusted her ruff. She was offended.

"You must, you must have many," said I, sighing upon my lace pillow; "for men will love you, whether you permit them or not."

There was something in the manner and bearing of Ernestine that impressed me with respect, and interested me extremely; and yet I conversed less with her than with Gabrielle, perhaps for the simple reason that the latter conversed more with me. I could jest and laugh at trifles with such a chatty little fairy as Gabrielle; but not so with her sister. I could make doggerel rhymes, say gallant speeches, and all those pretty nothings which come so readily to one's tongue when conversing with a pretty girl; but I dared not attempt the same strain with Ernestine. They seemed altogether unsuited to her queen-like air, and

high-bred reserve of manner, which were sometimes a little provoking.

On the morning of the third day I arose from bed, Dandy Dreghorn assisted me to dress; and, save a little swimming of the head, I found myself almost well. My cuirass shone like silver; I placed my claymore and bidadag in my belt, tied my scarf over my right shoulder, gave a finishing touch to my long locks, and that short mustache, the sprouting of which I cultivated with the utmost assiduity, and descended to breakfast with the young ladies, in a lofty apartment, the windows of which opened upon the terrace of a garden, clothed in all the freshness, the brilliant flowers, and the beauty of midsummer. The doors, windows, and cornices were beautifully proportioned; the ceilings and panels were covered by paintings of the school of Reubens. Hand in hand with satyrs, a long string of immodest-looking nymphs ran round the walls below the frieze, and in some places a bearded ancestor of the Baron Karl looked grimly out of his oak frame, and under his square helmet of the fourteenth century. In this room there was the hum of the summer flies, as they floated on the warm and perfumed atmosphere. We were just sitting down to a breakfast, composed of every delicacy which the fertile provinces of Bremen and Luneburg could afford, when the count, with his nodding red plume, suddenly appeared before the window, dismounting from *Bellochio* on the terrace, and we saw his tall figure between the embroidered curtains of Indian muslin and German hangings, like some vivid portrait of an ancient knight—for the fashion of his arms was somewhat old. His daughters sprang from the table to embrace and lead him in.

"In three hours," said he, "Count Tilly will be here, and our friend must be concealed forthwith."

"Within the house?" asked Ernestine, her eyes filling with an expression of alarm.

"Of course, girl; nowhere would he be safe out of it. The whole country is full of our troops, and the Croats and Hungarian heyducs are swarming like locusts in every village. Tilly's advanced guard (Tzertzski's regiment of musketeers, under Colonel Gordon) passed Reinsdorf this morning about daybreak—so my scouts inform me."

Through the great chateau this intelligence spread like wildfire. Corporal Spürriedter, who, with other old troopers, clad in their calfskin boots and yellow doublets, with red sashes and red worsted fringes, had been dozing in the warm sunshine, almost asleep over tric-trac, with pipe in mouth, and pots of Dantzic beer beside them, started when the trumpets blew *boot and saddle*, and hurried to accoutre themselves and their horses. The old German housekeeper (who, protected by her age and ugliness,

had remained when others fled) was now in greater tribulation than ever; and Dandy Dreghorn, who was busy in the kitchen manufacturing some Hamburg meal, which he had discovered, into excellent Scottish porridge, made the greatest imaginable haste to get the whole (though scalding hot) under his belt, before Tilly came up with his troopers.

"Now, my young friend," said the Count to me during breakfast, "I believe that I need not inform you of the necessity of your avoiding old Tilly."

"Believe me, count, I have not the slightest wish to throw myself unnecessarily in his way, but assuredly I will not condescend to avoid him."

"You must do so! your safety imperatively demands it. Why, the old Tartar would think no more of having you hanged or shot than I do of slicing the top of this egg; and if chance should make him acquainted with your vicinity, and if I should say you are come to join the Emperor, as many of our Catholic Scots, the Gordons of the Garioch, the Lindsays and the Leslies, have done, you will not gainsay me."

"Count, I will never stoop to this subterfuge. Pardon me," I added, on perceiving that his haughty brow clouded; "at the worst I am but a prisoner of war, and, as such, have a right to expect that honourable treatment which our brave defence at yonder bridge deserves."

"The devil! you are like a red-hot cannon-ball; one does not know on what side to take hold of you. By this time you should know that in the cause of the Empire and of Catholicism, Tilly unites the enthusiasm of Peter the Hermit to the ferocity of a tiger and the cunning of a fox. Such is the general of the armies of the League. I implore you to beware of him, for the mercy he may grant, not to one, but to a thousand prisoners of war, depends but upon the miserable caprice of a moment. This is a religious war; faith fights against faith, and men's hearts are hardened and inflamed by the ferocity their preachers inculcate. We are just about to assail another party of Ohristian's Scottish troops, who keep that important post, the Castle of Lauenburg."

"Ah!" said I, pushing away my cup of coffee; "and I, who would give the world to be there, am *here*!"

"The whole world," said Ernestine; "you are a large proprietor!" I thought there was a tone of pique in her quiet remark—pique at my ungrateful wish to be gone. I gazed upon her, and her beauty seemed as perfect as female loveliness could be—as perfect as any that ever smiled on Raffaello da Urbino in the midst of his happiest reveries.

"Ernestine," said the Count, raising his eyebrows, "you know he is coming with Tilly?"

"No," replied the daughter, over whose fair face there flitted a perceptible shadow, which belied her negative.

"His aide-de-camp, the Count Albert Kœnigheim—Halbert Cunningham, a cadet of the house of Glencairn," he added to me, "who has been a successful soldier in the wars of the Empire."

"Ah—indeed!" I murmured, walking to the window.

"Receive him well, Ernestine," I heard the count saying, in a low voice, as he smoothed the beautiful braids of her hair; "receive him as one who deserves your utmost esteem and has my best regard."

"Oh! father——"

"My countryman—rich, young, handsome, powerful, high in favour with the Emperor, with Tilly, and the army; covered with orders and honours, you will soon learn to love him Ernestine—will you not?"

"I will try." I thought I heard a sigh.

"Thou art a good girl—I love thee dearly," said the frank noble, as he kissed his daughter's brow; "and I will send for that magnificent set of diamonds you fancied at Vienna. I gave my word to Kœnigheim, when he saved my life at Rütten, that I would make him my kinsman if I could. Ah! for my sake he ran a deadly peril there, and gave me his own horse when mine was torn almost asunder beneath me, by a cannon-shot."

Not a word of this had escaped me, and I felt something rising in my heart.

"Pshaw!" said I; "what is Ernestine to me? I shall never see her again. Yet she has been so kind, that I hope this Scotch-German count will make a good husband to her."

I think there is a sentiment—shall we call it pique or jealousy?—in the minds of most young men, when they behold a beautiful young woman placed, or about to be placed, beyond their reach.

"Yes—yes!" thought I; "it is just this jealousy that animates me at present."

"You are admiring my mansion," said the count, approaching me.

"It is magnificent," said I, turning from the beautiful garden to the equally beautiful apartment, through the painted windows of which a deluge of warm morning light was shed upon the floor of polished oak, and the gilded carving of the wainscoting.

"I shall build a pretty summer-house at the end of that walk. I have received the whole place as a free gift from the Emperor."

"My poor friend, the Baron Karl, has not been consulted on this transfer," said I; "but by what right does Ferdinand II. gift away these lands in Luneburg?"

"The right of conquest," replied the count, laughing. "Ah!

you will never gain a fair heritage by fighting under the godly Christian IV. This will make a nice little chateau for my daughters, while we follow Christian through the Danish isles. I'll make old Spürledter governor of it. Dost think you are well enough to ride? for, without being inhospitable, my dear friend, I would gladly have you altogether clear of this neighbourhood before Tilly arrives—and now, by heaven and earth! yonder he comes!" added the count, as the sharp note of a cavalry trumpet, followed by the rapid clank of horses' hoofs, was heard in the court of the mansion. "Away with our guest, Ernestine," said the count, starting from the table; "to your care I entrust him!"

"Come with me—quick, Herr Kombeek!" said she, holding out her hand.

"Kombeek—what a devil of a name!" thought I, as she hurried me away towards a wing of the mansion which was appropriated to themselves.

"If the soldier who is with me falls into Tilly's hands, I shall never forgive myself for not saving him. And see, madame," I added, as we passed a window, "yonder he stands—oh! the incorrigible ass!—eating apples on the terrace, and gazing open-mouthed at the approaching cavalcade."

I summoned him angrily from the window. He lingered for a moment to conceal his fruit in the neuk of his plaid, and then hurried to join me.

We were both consigned to a retired apartment, where we were to remain, as Ernestine said, until Tilly quitted the house to join the head-quarters of his army.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PROBABILITY OF ESCAPING AND LEAVING MY HEART BEHIND ME.

THOUGH this retreat was necessary for our safety, and plenty of provisions were sent to us, to the great contentment of Dandy Dreghorn, and though we had the full liberty of traversing certain apartments which overlooked the spacious garden of the mansion, (to me) there was something rather irritating in the conviction of being compelled to lurk like a thief, even from the terrible Tilly; the more so, as at a distance we heard the twang of trumpets and horns, and the din of cymbals and kettle-drums, as his columns of horse and foot poured on towards the fated Elbe.

The apartments and their furniture were alike elegant and luxurious; the high-backed chairs were of ebon-like oak, covered

by crimson velvet and stuffed with down; the floors, of hard red Memel wood, were polished and garnished till they shone like glass; the tapestries of crimson and gold were set in broad carved frames of oak and gilded wood; the lozenge windows were tinted by innumerable coats-of-arms; some of the compartments stood open, admitting into these old chambers, which were coeval with the days of Magnus Torquatus, Duke of Luneburg, the warmth of the July sun, together with the rich perfume of the ripe strawberry beds, the fragrant honeysuckle, the jasmine and the rose, which mingled with the bright red and blue convolvuli, that clambered up the carved mullions of the antique casements.

Within the mansion, but at a distance, I heard the sound of voices and of laughter—the loud hearty laughter of heedless soldiers; for the count was entertaining Tilly and some of the officers and cavaliers of his staff.

During the somewhat monotonous day I spent in these stately apartments, Ernestine and Gabrielle came separately to converse with me for a few minutes—to bring me books and refreshments—evincing so much kindness and sisterly solicitude in these little visits, that my heart swelled with gratitude and pleasure; and I looked forward with regret to the time that must separate me from hostesses so ladylike and so winning.

About sunset, when I had given up the expectation of seeing them any more, I heard the rustle of a silk dress in the long corridor, and saw Ernestine standing irresolutely at the farthest end of it, with the embarrassed air of one who thought she was coming too often! She stood and smiled, her timid expression contrasting strongly with the noble beauty of her face and figure. I sprang forward—I was so happy to see her; for there are so many ways in which one can be interested in a beautiful woman—but Ernestine was yet quite a girl. All I had seen of her, during those three days which we had spent constantly together under such peculiar circumstances, with her father's remarks about Tilly's aide-de-camp, increased rather than diminished this interest, for she evidently did not care a jot about her destined husband.

"I come for the last time to see you again," said she, with one of her sweet and quiet smiles; "at midnight Corporal Spürledter will meet you at the end of this corridor, and conduct you to a secret place on the bank of the Elbe—a place that is unwatched, and to which (on burning a blue light) a boat will come off from the Saxe-Lauenburg side, and convey you away."

"I will never forget this kindness, Ernestine," I replied, timidly touching her hand with my lip; "never! You and Gabrielle have been to me as sisters. I go—and you will remember me no

more; but believe me the memory of these last three days will never be effaced from my mind."

She smiled.

"And you tell me all this as if I did not know soldiers, who say the same thing to every pretty fräulein who binds up a scar, or is compelled to act hostess by a burgomaster's order. While Tilly and my father march on their troops to the conquest of Denmark, Gabrielle and I will reside here; and the count has desired me to say, that if ever you should find yourself a prisoner or a fugitive, friendless and in want of military employment, to communicate with him through the officer commanding any Austrian garrison, and he will not fail to succour and protect you. Here, at our new appanage, Gabrielle and I will remain until the war with Christian is over, and we return to Carlstein, or our new hotel near the Scots Gate at Vienna. At all events," she added, as she gave me her hand with that charming frankness which she inherited from her Scottish rather than her Spanish blood, "whatever the fortune of war may be, and though we may never meet again, you will ever be our friend."

"Your friend, Ernestine! oh, I shall ever be more than that!"

"Of course, are you not my enemy, and fighting against the great Catholic Empire? You must content you with being, if you can, my simple friend."

"Ernestine," I began, taking her hand again——

"Nay, nay," she replied quickly, in a way that somewhat reminded me of my friend the actress; "do not look lacrymose and attempt to act the lover, for lovers quarrel many times, but friends seldom more than once. Besides, rumour says that Gabrielle and I have quite too many admirers already."

There was more of Gabrielle's playfulness in this than the queenlike manner usual to Ernestine. We gazed at each other timidly, and then smiled.

"My old confessor, Father d'Eydel, of the Order of Jesus, wrote a charming little book on love and friendship," said Ernestine; "and, moreover, he dedicated it to Gabrielle and me——"

"I should like to know the Jesuit's ideas of love."

"He said that one friend was worth an army of lovers; that love is like wine—bright, beautiful, and intoxicating; but friendship is like the inexhaustible water of a pure fountain—clear, cool, and refreshing: he said that love was all hot and heedless impulse, whereas friendship embraced the finest emotions of the heart and head."

"You are quite a philosopher; and yet—ah! Ernestine——
e is a merry twinkle in your beautiful eyes belying all you

"Moreover, Father d'Eydel told me, at the Scots convent, I should have nothing to do with lovers——"

"Father d'Eydel——" I began impatiently.

Ernestine held up her pretty white hand.

"He told me love was like a two-edged sword——"

"Did he not tell you it was like wine, but with water too?"

"That it enerved the hearts of the young, and failed to inspire the hearts of the old. To women he recommended religion and the cloister——"

"This devil of a d'Eydel would soon bring the world to an end! And to men——"

"A jovial cup of wine; for it never failed alike to fire the hearts of the old and the young, the brave and the timid. But now, sir, I must leave you. Tilly is to sup with my father, who at nightfall is to make a movement up the Elbe with his own regiments, the Reitres of Giezar and Kœningrats, so that I cannot absent myself longer. Adieu!—believe me, you have all our best and kindest wishes——"

"Ernestine!" I urged, endeavouring to detain her.

"Our Lady bless you! do not forget that at midnight Spürr-ledter will be awaiting you at the end of that passage."

She retired by the door, which she had been gradually approaching, and, as it closed, my heart felt a pang at the idea that we should never meet again. But a soldier's life is full of merry meetings and sad partings. In time, I fear me, we get used to them.

Honest Dandy's loquacity, when I announced the enterprise on which we were to set forth at midnight, considerably disturbed the current of my reflections. I would rather have been alone. I longed for one more glimpse of Ernestine, and to have one word more with her. Fifty things I had left unsaid now occurred to me, and many that seemed as if they had been better left unsaid. Then came the usual fears, that I might have offended her by saying too much—"but what matter all these thoughts?" I said; "to-morrow the Elbe will be between us, and next day we shall forget all about it. But I still seemed to see that soft feminine face, and those beautiful dark eyes, and the voice of Ernestine lingered in my ear, till, as I reclined on one of the cushioned window-seats, and gazed upon the dying twilight, night stole on; and Dandy (who had been examining with grim accuracy the edges of our swords and dirks, and had charged my pistols), finding that I was averse to conversation, wiled away the time by making a last investigation of the panelled chambers, in the hope of finding a stray edible or drinkable in some forgotten nook. Then he drew to my side as the darkness deepened; for the grotesque features, and old German architecture of the place began to have, as he said, "an unco mirk and eerie look about them."

CHAPTER XXV.

A SERIOUS MISTAKE, AND A LEARNED DISCUSSION ON WOMEN.

THE hours stole slowly on, and as they wore away, and the hour of escape drew nigh, my anxiety increased, more perhaps than the whole occasion merited; but the wound on my head rendered me feverish and fretful, as poor Dandy Dreghorn soon found; for, growing weary of his incessant chatter, I abruptly told him to hold his tongue, and we sat moping like two owls in the dark, listening to the hours and half-hours, as they were struck slowly and sonorously by the clock over the ancient gateway of the house. The voices in distant apartments died away; the oak chamber became so black that we could not see each other's faces.

Midnight was at hand.

"Ernestine will now be in bed," thought I; "but will she be asleep, or watching for my escape?" Imagination conjured up a picture of this girl, with all her dark hair gathered in a silken caul, lying sleepless on her laced pillows, with the pretty Gabrielle nestling beside her, listening for every sound, and watching for the time which would assure them that we were free of the mansion, and safe from the dangerous vicinity of the terrible John of Tserclä.

"See, sir," said Dandy, "a light begins to glint at the end o' yon ambulatory!"

"'Tis the corporal—and there is the first stroke of twelve! The old trooper is punctual."

From the window-seat, where for hours I had been ruminating and gazing on the darkened landscape, I arose with a beating heart; loosened my claymore in its sheath, to be prepared for any emergency, and saying to Dreghorn—

"Follow, but follow me softly, and for Heaven's sake *silently*!" approached the light which glimmered at the end of the long corridor, and seemed to be flashing upward from the bottom of a staircase. On gaining the landing which overlooked it, we saw—not the old corporal whom we expected—but an older and decrepit cavalier, who leant with his right hand on a gold-headed cane, and with his left on the arm of a tall officer, who was brilliantly attired in a doublet of cloth of gold with hanging sleeves, with a mantle of scarlet velvet, a long rapier and plume. They were preceded by two servants bearing candles, but slowly, as the old man paused frequently to draw breath or make an observation.

Dubious whether to advance or retreat, I stood for a moment mute; but fearing that to be seen by any one save the family

of the count might betray him and them, and compromise our own safety, I resolved on immediate concealment; but Dreghorn, in his eagerness and confusion, mistook the way back to our former lurking-place, and by advancing too far along the passage, led me into a larger and more magnificent room. This I could perceive by the moonlight, which fell in large broad flakes through the mullioned windows.

"Harkee, Dreghorn," said I, "this way—not that. Dost hear?—devil take thee, fellow, and send thee back to thy plough-stilts!"

My loud whispers were unheeded or unheard; thus I was obliged to follow, lest by some clownish blunder he might compromise us all.

"Quick—conceal yourself!" said I; "for, whoever these are, they come this way; and, if they discover us, we are both as dead men."

Perceiving that the room was hung with arras, I raised it at the foot and let it drop over my person, while standing flat against the wall, in a position which, to say the least of it, was very constrained, unpleasant, and dusty.

"Lord preserve us, and keep us! I'll be caught noo, like a rat in a girdle!" cried Dandy in great tribulation, as he ran three or four times round the room in search of a similar nook, overturning a chair or two in the dark; and, becoming more bewildered as he heard the approaching footsteps, he made a sudden dive below a large and stately bed which stood close to the wall, on one side of the chamber; and there he was barely ensconced, when all the gildings of its canopy, and of the corniced ceiling and furniture, glittered, as the two servants entered with their lights, and, placing them on the table, withdrew, retiring backwards before the little old man with a reverence which, together with his whole peculiar bearing (for I could overlook and overhear all through a hole in the decayed hangings), told me he was Tilly—the great, the ferocious, the terrible Tilly—the soldier-Jesuit—the demon-general of the Emperor Ferdinand!

"You may go," said he, to the servants, and they retired.

Leaning on the arm of the tall cavalier, and on his gold-headed cane, he crossed the waxed floor with a step rendered somewhat unsteady by age, and reached a large stuffed chair, then, seating himself, he drew several long breaths, during which the officer remained respectfully silent, with his plumed beaver in his right hand, and his left resting in the polished bowl-hilt of his long toledo.

Figure to yourself a little, lean old man, past his seventieth year, and made more aged in aspect by the asceticism of a youth passed in a Jesuit college, and by the wounds and toils of war;

a thin face and high narrow forehead, alternately clouded by thought, and knit by irritability; fierce, deep eyes, like those of a rattlesnake, the hooked nose of his Spanish mother, the tiger-like mouth of his Walloon father, with a lanky cat-like mustache to show that he was a soldier, and the small remains of a tonsure to declare that he was yet a priest. A lean, bent body, encased in a leather doublet rusted over by the constant use of ill-conditioned armour; meagre thighs and crooked knees, cased in wide calfskin boots, having enormous jinglspurs; a long sword, a little mantle, a high ruff, a broad-brimmed hat of brown felt with a steeple crown, garnished by a red feather stuck into the gold image of Madonna, which, with his magnificent diamond ring, he afterwards bequeathed to our Lady of Oetingen. Such was John de Tserclä, the Count de Tilly, generalissimo of Ferdinand II. and of the troops of the Catholic League, so celebrated for his valour and cunning, his generosity to Catholics, his ferocity to Protestants—his aversion to women, to wine, and to all human weakness—save the fear of ghosts!

Early in life he became a follower of St. Ignatius Loyola. In the seclusion of his cloister this fierce enthusiast had a vision.

The mother of God appeared before him, surrounded by the rays of glory; thirteen stars sparkled about her brow, and the lilies of purity sprang from under her feet; clouds rolled around her, and little angels bore up her long flowing garments. She urged him to take arms for the Church of Rome—for the extermination of Protestantism, and the total subjugation of Northern Europe. He became a soldier, and fought bravely; and in an incredibly short space of time attained, solely by incontestable merit, a marshal's baton and the sole command of the Imperial troops; but the camp fed rather than cured his wild and visionary schemes of a universal faith, and the conquest of the Protestant nations. Hence that mad ferocity, of which we had so many terrible examples, during the long struggle for the freedom of religion and the liberty of Germany. He was a believer in dreams, and was supposed by the Danes and Swedes to possess a charmed life, which our musketeers often put sorely to the test; hence Tilly's abhorrence of the Scottish brigades in Germany. An astrologer, he was intensely superstitious, and relied devoutly on omens; hence we find them preceding all his greatest undertakings. When he held the famous council of war at Hamelin, a hurricane blew up the powder-magazine, and, reaching devoted Magdeburg, extinguished the lamps of the wise virgins in the great cathedral. The night before the great battle of Leipzig, he quartered himself in a house which proved to be an *undertaker's*; hence, though brave as a lion, he fought the action next

day with a wavering heart, and with the certainty of meeting disaster and death.

"Count Kœningheim," said he, drawing a long breath, and pausing. I applied my eye to a hole in the tapestry, and surveyed with curiosity the personage addressed. This was his aide-de-camp, the intended husband of Ernestine, and in all things the reverse of his leader. Tall, handsome, and sunburned, with a bushy mustache and devil-may-care eye, which announced him a jovial Reitre—a stanch comrade, a thorough *bon-vivant*—one of those merry fellows who wink at landladies, kiss pretty waitresses, and make themselves at home everywhere. I saw at a glance that he would never suit Ernestine.

"Count Albert, is Carlstein fairly away to join his column?"

"Yes, generalissimo. I heard him ride out of the quadrangle, with his aides and two Reitres, about ten minutes ago."

"Good!" muttered Tilly, laying his broad beaver on the table; "he is a tiresome fellow—too proper a man for me, and would make war after a gentle fashion of his own. He is your countryman—but you must excuse me. His column marches on the Lauenburg road—and the horse regiments of Goëtz, Wallace the Scot, and Wingarti are moving on the same point. Ah! our pontoons will soon make us a passage across the Elbe!"

"Wingarti's dragoons are all puppies, and think more of their mustaches than their muskets."

"And this Count of Carlstein has two women in his train—ha! ha!" said Tilly, with a sardonic laugh, as he unbuckled his waist-belt and laid his long rapier on the table; "two women, Kœningheim—the man is mad!"

"He introduced them as his daughters," replied the other, colouring a little with vexation.

"A mere trick—daughters, cousins, and sisters have been introduced to me thus before! You cunning fellows begin to think me stupid."

"On my honour, Count Tilly, I swear to you they are his daughters."

"What faith you have in their mother? Daughters! well, well, so much the worse—a wise man truly to lead a column of infantry—one who has daughters! I do not love to have women following our army, Kœningheim. I have known many a brave fellow lost to Austria and God's service by the fascinations of that subtle sex, whose sole object is to create passions and rivalry among gallant men, without feeling in their own hearts one spark of this so-called love, of which idlers rave and poets sing."

"Your excellency is speaking like the Jesuit you were, and

not like the brave soldier you are," replied Count Albert, with a cold smile.

"I am speaking like a man of common sense, Kœningheim," retorted Tilly, grasping the knobs of his arm-chair, and turning his snakelike eyes upon the broad honest face of the colonel of Reitres. "Beware *you* of their snares, count; and recollect that the first object of an Imperialist cavalier is the cause of God and of the Emperor—the Cross and the Eagle; that all private sympathies must yield to the public good. By the wiles of a woman Adam lost his innocence, Samson his strength, and Mark Antony the fruit of all his victories. Ah! beware of them, Kœningheim, beware of them!" added Tilly, drawing his lean legs out of his enormous boots. "No man," saith Saint Jerome, "can serve God with a whole heart, if he hath any transactions with a woman."

"Corpo di Baccho! but one may very well lead a regiment of horse, serve the Emperor, and love a pretty woman occasionally," said the aide-de-camp, twirling his mustaches; "the fact is, count, that what suited Saint Jerome well enough will not suit me, or Merodé, or Wingarti, or any of us but yourself, who are quite a model of a man! Women are called the pious sex, and I have no doubt Saint Jerome had a high opinion of them in his time."

"So had Cornelius Agrippa," sneered Tilly; "he wrote a notable treatise on female excellence, and yet withal divorced his *third* wife. Ha! ha! What make up the sum of this love thou pratest about? Rich gauds, billets-doux, sighs, and treachery! I have seen many a gallant man, who had hewn a passage through a forest of pikes, become a woman's plaything—then flung aside and forgotten, as a toy is forgotten by a child."

"By my soul, Count Tilly, you are a million times too severe," laughed Kœningheim; "I know of no satisfaction equalling that with which a stout fellow, who had done his service in battle duly, basks in the smiles of some kind beauty."

"'Tis the mere fanfaronade of Don Quixote, this—but, hark! do you not hear something?"

"I do; what the devil can it be?" said Count Kœningheim, as a very palpable sound of mastication came from below the vast tester-bed where Dandy Dreghorn had ensconced himself, and where, I had no doubt, he was satisfying his never-ending appetite with some of the provision saved over our dinner.

"Devil take thee after, glutton!" thought I; "for if taken *now*, the cord will be thy doom."

"This old house must be full of rats," said Tilly. "Count, I will thank you to turn that portrait to the wall. I hate to sleep

among portraits of the dead, they have such a ghastly look in their staring eyes, and that old dame in her coif is like a corpse in a winding-sheet—ah, thank you!”

So this old Tartar, who fought afterwards at Leipzig, who stormed Feldberg, exterminated the Scottish garrison at Brandenburg, ravaged the margraviate of Anspach and the banks of the Danube—trembled at the sight of an old picture!

“Ay, ay!” he resumed with a yawn as the portrait was turned; “women are strange and capricious animals. I have known one love to death a man whom every other woman—yea, and every other man, too—detested. Now, how do you account for *that*, Count Albert? Obstinacy—I tell you, rank obstinacy!”

“Nay, general,” yawned the aide, behind his hat, with the air of a man who was excessively tired; “there is always a cause for love.”

“A cause, but not a reason. Women and wine make fools of our finest men.”

“Surely it is better to be fooled by a pretty woman than a paltry wine-pot.”

“But I will have my soldiers fooled by neither,” said Tilly, striking his withered hand upon the table. “I am a priest, and, though a soldier, know of such matters only by name. But hence with this rubbish. What is the strength of your regiment, count?”

“Eight hundred under baton, your excellency.”

“Any married men?”

“Not one.”

“Good! when Reitres marry they should be struck off the muster roll. Yet I could have sworn I saw some of your fellows on the march yesterday with women *en croupe* behind them.”

“Only ammunition-wives, your excellency.”

“Ah! I have heard that there are some thorough-bred rascals in the regiment.”

“The fact is, general, that Stalhofen’s troop is composed, like the honourable regiment of Merodé, entirely of thieves from Vienna.”

“Diavolo! dost thou say so? Then the sacking of the Danish towns will suit their humour to a hair, without fear of the gallows. Ah! wait till we reach Kiöbenhafën!”

The count uttered a shout of laughter; Tilly added one of his frightful grins, and rubbing his lean brown hands, said—

“I blush that such rascals as the regiment of Merodé march beneath our consecrated colours; yet the end will sanctify the means. If there was one rogue among the twelve apostles, there

may easily be one regiment of rogues among the thousands of the Imperial host. War is the pastime of kings, but it manufactures many a thief and beggar."

"Hah!" said Kœningheim, as a horseman rode into the court, "that will be our scout returned from Saxe-Lauenburg."

"Send him up then, Kœningheim, and thereafter you may retire to bed, for we must all be in our saddles at cock-crow; but I have two hours' work before me yet, having all my office to say over, for I have never forgotten in the camp the duties I took upon me in the cloister."

The handsome aide-de-camp gladly hurried away. Tilly drew from his breast a small and well-used volume, containing probably the "office," or prayers he referred to—placed a mark between the leaves, and devoutly crossed himself. Then he paused; a heavy step approached, the door was opened, and a personage wearing a broad felt hat and large Spanish cloak towered between me and the light, as he advanced towards Tilly, who, shading his sharp eyes, gazed with a keen rat-like expression at this stranger, who, immediately upon entering, had carefully closed the door, as if he had that to communicate which none must overhear.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SCOUT; AND THE EFFECT OF A SNEEZ.

"WELCOME, thou prince of spies, and my scoutmaster-general!" said Tilly in Spanish; "be seated, señor."

The scout removed his broad hat, let the folds of his cloak fall, and seated himself opposite the count with an air of fatigue.

"Have you collected much intelligence of the enemy's movements?" asked Tilly, drawing a large and well-filled purse from his girdle—a motion which made the eyes of the scout flash.

"I have, señor generalissimo," replied the stranger, in a voice which I recognised, and which made me start, for it was either that of the Hausmeister or the devil (a personage of equal merit). Then I heard the purse clink, as it was thrown by the count like a bone to a dog—and caught by the adroit hand of the spy.

"Then you can tell me of those Scots auxiliaries who were at Boitzenburg—quick, señor Bandolo!"

"Bandolo!" A new light broke upon me, and, applying my eye to the tapestry, I recognised the broad ruffian face, the cold fierce eyes and square mouth of my old acquaintance, Otto Roskilde—the Hausmeister of Glückstadt—whom I now discovered to be one and the same with that terrible Bandolo, of whom the Baron Karl had given us an account—the brother of

Prudentia! His dress was somewhat different; but his false paunch and rotundity (assumed for disguise) were gone, and he stood revealed—a strong, wiry, and athletic ruffian—a bravo, with his long sable locks, and long daggers in his belt.

"The troops who were at Boitzenburg have retired down the Elbe. I tracked them to Lauenburg, in the castle of which their commander——"

"The commandante, *d'Umbar*?"

"Si, señor conde—left two companies, and marched with the remainder to Glückstadt, from whence he moved immediately to take possession of Rantzau's castle of Bredenburg."

"Who commands the two companies in the castle of Lauen?"

"A certain Major Wilson."

"Wilson—Wilson!" muttered Tilly, turning over the leaves of a memorandum book; "oh—here he is! a brave and determined cavalier—commanded five hundred of the Scottish auxiliary musketeers at the battle of Lutter, and captured a standard of Merodé's regiment. He will give us trouble, but we shall pay him a visit to-morrow. God's curse on these heretic Scots! for they meet us everywhere now, by the Rhine, the Elbe, and the Oder. They lead all the troops in Northern Europe. What more hast thou heard?"

"That Major-general Slammersdorff is concentrating near Rapin a large force, which King Christian means to march into Silesia."

"Dost thou say so?"

"Por vida del demonio—I do!"

"I should like to see this force in Silesia," said Tilly, with a quiet smile.

"Rittmaster Hume de Carrolside, with a troop of Scottish pistoliers, has arrived to reinforce Otto Louis, the rhinegrave."

"Scots again!" said Tilly, with a terrible smile, as he scratched his leg, which a Scottish musketeer had pierced by a bullet in the Hartz forest; "Maladetta! it is too much!—Ere long we shall not have room to move between the Black Sea and the Baltic for this Protestant scum."

A mysterious sound was heard below the bed again; it sounded like the grunt of a pig, and Tilly raised his head to listen.

"Heaven keep Dreghorn awake!" thought I; "for if he sleeps and snores we are lost!"

"This old house is wonderfully full of rats," said Tilly; "well, have you heard anything more?"

"Nothing, señor generalissimo, save that King Christian, by the erection of redoubts and turf sconces, is leaving nothing undone to secure everywhere the banks and the passage of the Elbe."

"The fool! when too late he will learn the power of the Empire."

"Your excellency is the greatest general under heaven; *vaya usted à los infernos!*" he added in a low voice, as he counted the gold pieces under the shade of the table. "Away to the infernal regions, for a beggarly old skinflint!"

"Go, my priceless Bandolo," said Tilly; "recross this muddy Elbe; become once more a Dane, a Dutchman, or a Holsteiner, for I know thou art a very Proteus, and spread everywhere the rumour that I am about to retire towards the Weser. I know that thou art faithful to the Empire, Bandolo; though I have heard it said, that he who betrayeth one cause will betray another. The Count of Carlstein hath said to me more than once that he considered the principle of secret intelligence as dishonourable. A chivalric fool! If a battle is gained, or a city won, what matters it whether or not the victors owe their success to force or fraud? No man is qualified to lead an army, unless he is inclined to obtain tidings of the foe by every possible means that do not include open assassination or public dishonour."

Bandolo smiled.

"I have found thee invaluable, my good Bandolo, and would gladly yield thee some nobler recompense than that base gold, for which thou perillest life and soul every hour thou art beyond the Austrian lines."

"Señor generalissimo, I will freely give back all the gold you have given me for three years past——"

"A goodly sum, Señor Bandolo!"

"Yea—I will do more; I will undertake to secure to you the passage of the Elbe if——"

"If what——" said Tilly, whose eyes glared with impatience.

"You will procure for me a wife, and this wife must be Ernestine, the Lady of Giezar, daughter of Count Rupert-with-the-red-plume."

This was said with the utmost confidence and deliberation; but the daring speech made the pulses of my heart to flutter.

"Devil take thee, blockhead," said Tilly, "for elating my heart so high, and then sinking it so low! For aught that old John de Tserclä cares, you may have all the women in the empire; but, friend, be assured you might as well look at the moon (what the deuce is shaking that tapestry so?) as this count's dark-eyed daughter. I have seen the dainty dame. Why, Bandolo, she would shrink from thy touch as from a toad. But I am neither her guardian nor her father, (thank Heaven!) and believe me, my poor presumptuous ragamuffin, you might as well raise your eyes to a princess of the House of Hapsburg,

as a daughter of this proud soldier of Fortune. Maladetto! but you rate your services high."

"Because I rate them myself."

"The vilest rogue will always bring a goodly sum if sold at his own valuation," muttered Tilly, with one of his hideous smiles. I believe sincerely, that nothing would have afforded his cynical heart greater delight than to see the high-bred and accomplished Ernestine mated to the ruffian (if such a catastrophe were possible), from the very incongruity of such a union, and to humble the high military pride and boasted spotlessness of character possessed by the count, her father. "Bandolo," said he, gravely, "no more of this wild fantasy, which may hang thee, my prince of spies. Lady Ernestine is, I believe, to be the wife of my aide-de-camp, Count Kœningheim, poor man!"

"Hah!" muttered Bandolo, as his hand was covertly and almost involuntarily raised to the hilt of his murderous poniard.

"But there is no saying what we may achieve if your scheme for the passage of the Elbe is a good one," said Tilly, with a smile in his ferret eyes, as he rubbed his lean legs, which were cased in fustian breeches.

"I have learned (*how*, matters not, señor conde) that Rupert-with-the-red-plume has in his hands two Danish prisoners—Scots——"

"Mal hayas tu! Scots again!—hah—he told me not of *that*!"

"They were saved from the sconce at Boitzenburg."

"Yet I said that all there should die; and, had this order been obeyed, we should not now have to storm either the Castle of Lauenburg or that of Bredenburg. Ah! those Presbyterians!" added Tilly, grinding his fangless jaws; "if I had but a few of them enveloped in pitch and sulphur, they would light our bivouac, even as the early Christians were made into candles to light the Roman circus. But quick—your scheme!" continued Tilly, while the supposed scraping of rats was again heard beneath the bed.

"Obtain these two Scots, and march them with the troops against Lauenburg. Approach in the night, and make one betray his comrades."

"How betray? thou laughest at me again, Bandolo, knowing well that these Scottish heretics are stubborn as their native rocks."

"Lead them within earshot of their sentinels, and then place a loaded pistol to the head of each."

"Good—I'll see to it!" grinned Tilly, with one of his horrible smiles, which might have frightened even the dead; "but where, in the name of good and evil, are the two Scots you speak of?"

At that moment, as the devil would have it, a tremendous sneeze was heard under the bed.

"Madre de Dios! there is someone concealed here!" exclaimed little Tilly, starting up, with fire glaring in his eyes, as he unsheathed his long rapier. "Look under that bed, Bandolo, while I prick the tapestry."

Drawing his poniard, Bandolo raised the little curtain which surrounded the rails of the bed, on looking below which he was instantly grasped and dragged down by the strong hands of Dandy Dreghorn, who (rendered desperate by finding discovery inevitable, and knowing that we had but two assailants) encircled the bull-neck of the powerful Spanish ruffian with a tiger-like clutch, and rolled him on the floor, shouting—

"Strike in, Maister Rollo—strike in, for gudesake! Gie that auld wallydraigel in the breeks a jagg wi your dirk, while I pu' this ane through the heckle-pins!"

Taken completely by surprise, Bandolo was almost smothered by the dust under the bed, where he was so suddenly and ignominiously rolled. He struck furiously and at random with his poniard, till the blade broke against the oak planks of the floor, down upon which Dandy pressed his throat until he was nearly strangled, vociferating all the time—

"I'll cheat the wuddy o' ye, that I will! Heeh, ye damned tyke, think ye I'll ever lippen to a bodach that wore breeks!" Then he came forth, panting and breathless.

Seeing that without one desperate venture all was over with us, I had rushed from my hiding place, thrown down the table, extinguished the lights, closed with the frail old Tilly, and escaping a pistol-shot, which he fired within a yard of my nose, wrested and tore away from his hand the long rapier with which he menaced me. Had I chosen, I could there have run it through his heart, and saved Denmark, yea, and Germany, from the Thirty Years' War; but he was an aged man, and I was not an assassin.

"Awa, sir—awa! Ride or rin, flee or soom—let us awa, or we'll tyne our lives!" cried Dreghorn, and we rushed from the dark apartment, to find the corridor and staircase crowded by Reitres and pikemen, with drawn swords, lighted torches, and stable lanterns; for the uproar and the pistol-shot had alarmed Tilly's guard of honour, and brought all the soldiers, like a swarm of hornets, to his rescue.

"Dreghorn—farewell to life," said I; "it is all over with us!"

"We've owre mony maisters noo," he groaned; "as the puddock said, when ilka tuith o' the harrow gied him a tid."

Before this flood of armed men we retired backward into the darkened room, where Tilly was reclining breathlessly against a

post of the bed, from beneath which Bandolo, with a savage and lacrymose visage, blackened and distorted by rage and strangulation, was already crawling forth.

We were about to be cut down without farther parley, when Tilly, remembering that I had spared his life, and Count Koenigheim, who hurried forward in his breeches and boots, minus vest and doublet, threw themselves between us and death, and saved us for a time.

"Withhold your hand, Bandolo—Count, secure these villains!" said Tilly; "away with them to the quarter-guard, I will deal with them in the morning. Search this, and all the other apartments; double all the sentinels, for I fear me much there has been treachery."

We were immediately hurried away to a lower apartment, and handcuffed together.

On the way we passed old Spürledter, who had been alarmed by the uproar, and appeared in his shirt, blowing the match of his carbine. On beholding us, he gaped with well-feigned astonishment, which we understood quite well, and thus neither compromised the count nor the old corporal, who, with horses for our flight, had been waiting in an adjacent thicket for three hours, as he afterwards told me! and further, that the moment Tilly was fairly in his own apartment, that he—the corporal—had come in search of us, and, being totally unable to account for our mysterious disappearance at a time so critical, had retired to bed in the stables, supposing that we had escaped without him.

Book the Fifth.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MARCH TOWARDS LAUENBURG.

It may be easily supposed that neither Dandy Dreghorn nor I slept much for the short remainder of that eventful morning. Poor Dandy's lamentations for the plight into which his sneeze had brought me were incessant. The honest fellow never uttered a complaint for himself; but, having lost his appetite, resisted all the gruff invitations of our guard, who offered to share us their miserable ration of black bread and Danish beer. It required all my efforts to pacify my comrade, and convince him that he had no more power over an irrepressible desire to sneeze than over the wind.

With the grey dawn, Tilly came forth, accompanied by several officers, muffled in their mantles, with their helmets closed or their plumed hats slouched well over their faces, for the morning air was chilly. The sharp notes of the trumpet summoned a troop of Koenigheim's *Reitres to horse*, and with these Tilly trotted away, leaving four dismounted men, with their carbines loaded, and orders to conduct Dreghorn and myself to a certain place, which he named. As we were marched off, I gave a parting glance at the gothic lattices of the old mansion, and two female figures caught my eye. They were those of Ernestine and the kind-hearted Gabrielle. I perceived that the latter was weeping, but the former only waved her hand in adieu. I gave a profound bow, for which the surly corporal of our escort gave me a punch with his carbine, and we were compelled to move on.

While I was reflecting that Ernestine might have displayed some more emotion, for the worst of perils encompassed us, Spürledter came running after the soldiers to give them a glass of brandy; and, while their minds were intent upon the flask, he approached me, and slyly, with his hand behind him, thrust into mine a purse, with a brief whisper:—

"My young lady sends you this, Herr Kombeek—it is a long march to Vienna."

The purse was of blue velvet, embroidered with silver thread,

and the generous girl seemed to have filled it well. To have declined the gift, in my desperate circumstances, would have been uncourteous to her, folly to myself, and false modesty ; I concealed it at once in my sporran, and a glow of gratitude kindled in my heart.

"I shall end by loving Ernestine ; but I shall see her no more," thought I ; "the interest we take in each other is pure and sincere. I could not have loved Prudentia at all. Oh, no ! I grow sick when I reflect on my folly. 'Twas the dream of a day, and she is the sister of Bandolo !"

I saw little of the country during the march, for my whole attention was excited by the vast bodies of Imperialists then pouring along the left bank of the Elbe—horse, foot, and artillery—in tens of thousands, towards the ducal capital of Saxe-Lauenburg ; and on that day's march I observed and learned more of their internal economy than a hundred battles with them could have taught me.

Though rusty armour and patched doublets, plumeless helmets and battered morions, were very common in the Imperial ranks, nothing military could surpass the magnificence of many of the officers. Their mantles and trunk hose were of the richest velvets Florence and Genoa could produce ; their armour of the most gorgeous gilded plate from Venice and Milan, covered with sacred mottoes, figures, and charms, either religious or necromantic, to render them invulnerable—for they all believed implicitly in *fated* bullets and enchanted mail ; their pistols and daggers were from Parma, their swords from Bilboa and Toledo. On their breasts sparkled the stars of St. George of Austria, of the Golden Fleece, and other knightly orders peculiar to the Empire. Here I saw Tilly's weather-beaten Walloon infantry, and that savage Croatian force which had slaughtered our wounded Highlanders in cold blood at Boitzenburg ; among these were one regiment of horse, the Krabats of Castanovitz, lightly armed, with steel helmets and fur pelisses ; another of infantry or Uskokes, famous for their agility in all rapid movements. But Tilly's best troops were the fine old Imperial Reitres, in their black armour ; the pikemen of Pappenheim, the cavalier of a hundred wounds ; the musketeers of Wrangel, of Gordon, and Camargo ; the Italian bands of Savelli, and the glittering Spanish infantry, so easily distinguished by their fine lofty bearing, their brilliant arms, and short quick step on the march.

His regiments usually consisted of men armed in five different ways ; thus, in each company of a hundred soldiers, fifty were musketeers, thirty were pikemen, ten were halberdiers, and ten arquebusiers, armed also with swords and daggers ; but these numbers varied so much, that I have seen companies of three

hundred files, and regiments of three thousand. Every company carried a standard, and their order of battle was eight ranks deep.

Hard drinking, gaming, and licentiousness prevailed to the utmost extent, and thus (unlike the orderly armies of Christian and Gustavus) the Imperial camp swarmed with jugglers, dancers, posture-makers, and women of every description, from the luxurious ladies of the rich and powerful nobles, down to the cruel and dastardly death-hunter, who acted the lascivious wanton in the soldier's tent, and who murdered him when wounded, that she might plunder him with impunity when dead. Discipline was relaxed; yet desertion, punishment, grumbling, the saying of prayers and masses, were incessant. The corps were destitute of surgeons and chaplains; but (attracted by the presence of Tilly, a brother of their order) a swarm of long-robed and severe-visaged Jesuits hovered on the skirts of the army. Tilly's cavalry gave all their horses romantic names after great warriors renowned in song or antiquity. Thus, Count Merodé rode *Amadis of Gaul*; Count Kœningheim had the *Cid Rodrigo*; a third rode *Palmerin of England*; a fourth, *Tyrante the White*, and so on. Prisoners were never exchanged, all being shot who could neither pay ransom or stoop to serve under the Eagle. A colonel's ransom was £1000; a subaltern's, as much as he could scrape together.

The Scottish and Irish soldiers of fortune frequently passed from one service to the other; for, being passionate rogues, it sometimes happened that in quarrels they shot their senior officers, or ran them through the body; for, though we took their pay and fought their battles for glory and pleasure, we despised all these foreigners in our hearts, and made it a rule never to submit to the slightest encroachment or annoyance even from the best of them. Hence our quarrel with the king.

There were several regiments of Scottish and Irish musketeers in the Imperial service, and the best and bravest officers of the Empire were Scots and Irishmen. Among the former, I may mention Field-marshal Count Leslie, who became governor of Selavonia; the Gordons, one of whom became colonel-general of infantry and high-chamberlain of the Empire, and who slew the great Duke of Friedland; the M'Dougals, one of whom became a general of horse, and the Lindesays of Crauford, and others. Of the gallant Irish nation, were Colonels Macarthy, Grace, O'Neill, and Walter Butler, all brave men as ever looked face to face on Death; but save the old Welshman, Colonel Morgan, there was no Englishman of note in these wars—but Morgan was in himself a host.

About mid-day our surly corporal halted at a little farm-house. The proprietor, proving to be a good Catholic, escaped shooting,

and his house escaped the flames. Being an honest fellow, he made us—though prisoners—quite as welcome as the military ragamuffins who guarded us, and we all dined jovially together on fried bacon and Danish beer. Dandy Dreghorn ate voraciously to make up for the loss of his breakfast; and his applications to the “gudeman for anither slice o’ the grumphia,” and to the corporal for “anither cogue o’ the yill,” were incessant.

A fair-haired and blue-eyed little girl (the daughter of our host) gazed at me with terror, from time to time, from behind her father’s chair.

“Come hither, Wilhelmina,” said he, with a broad laugh; “thou seest these Scottish soldiers have but one head, like ourselves—not two, as Father d’Eydel told thee.”

I soon made a friend of this little lady, and hastened to assure her that I never had more than one head; I placed her on my knee, where she laughed and pulled my mustaches; while her little brother was peeping fearfully towards the end of my kilt, to see that forked tail which he understood all Protestants possessed.

Contrasted with the horrors of war, I envied the contentment that pervaded this good man’s hearth; but the sentiments of repugnance to rapine and strife become fainter the more often we are impressed; till at last they are worn out, like the rough thistles on our Scottish pennies, which obliterate as they are used. I can remember all the horror, the breathless shrinking, I felt on first seeing a poor fellow near me torn in two by a cannon-shot at Boitzenburg; but a time came when I could gaze without emotion at the sack of a city and the slaughter of a multitude. Curiosity and horror were then alike effaced; they had passed away, and callousness alone remained behind, till peace again restored the feelings to their proper tone. However, I sighed as I left the house of the German farmer, and resumed that weary march, the end of which I could not foresee.

On the road I was frequently accosted by Scots Imperialists, who spoke to me kindly, and expressed indignation to see me marched thus on foot, and fettered to a private soldier. In short, a general excitement on the subject soon prevailed among them; and, after Gordon’s musketeers had passed me, Tilly’s aide-de-camp, Count Koenigheim, camp up with an order to relieve me from the ignominy I endured, and the fetter was transferred to poor Dandy’s other hand. He stared meanwhile in blank astonishment at the count, who had addressed me in our pure native dialect.

“So you are a Scot, sir?” said I.

“Had I not been that,” said he, “I had left you to wear your

bracelet ; but dinna think o' escape ; for Tilly's a dour auld carle, and never tholes muckle."

"You have become so foreign in aspect and manner, that I never could have recognised in you a kindly Scot."

"But I *am* a kindly Scot!" he retorted with a sparkling eye. "At hame, in auld Glencairn and on the banks of the Urr, I am kent as Hab Cunningham o' the Boortree-haugh ; but here I am Albert Count Kœningheim, your friend and countryman. You must sup wi' me to-night ; I'll hae three or four mair—a' Scottish gentlemen—to join us in a glass for puir auld Scotland's sake. But excuse me, sir—for I see Count Tilly requires me. He hates the Scots like death or the deil, but he canna do without me ;" and, with his long plume streaming behind, this gay soldier galloped towards the head of the column of infantry.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

COUNT TILLY'S OPINION OF THE PRESBYTERIANS.

PASSING through Bleckede, a small town which is overlooked by a baronial castle, and through Radegast, both of which were plundered by the advanced guard of Croatian uskokes, we followed the course of the Elbe towards Lauenburg. As we passed an ancient tower in the dusk, I remember hearing the notes of the watchman's horn, when (in the old German fashion) he proclaimed the first hour of the night. By three long halts, Tilly delayed his march in such a manner that, though the distance was short, night had descended on the Elbe and its shores before we saw the lights twinkling in the old castle, which was occupied by two companies of my own regiment, under Major Wilson. The little town was deserted, for the inhabitants had all fled into Holstein by the bridge, which the castle defended by its cannon.

The town is situated at the confluence of a stream named the Stecknitz with the Elbe ; its castle, which is said to have been built by Heinrich the Lion, Duke of Saxony, was strong, and crowned an eminence which Barnard, Prince of Anhalt, the successor of Heinrich, had left nothing undone to strengthen ; but their old towers of the twelfth century, though black, and strong, and grim, were never meant to withstand the dint of cannon-shot.

At the foot of the steep eminence, and about a pistol-shot from the walls, was an ancient gate, surmounted by the demi-eagle of Anhalt carved on stone ; and there Major Wilson had posted a picquet or outguard of my brave comrades, as Bandolo, who had
† forward to reconnoitre and espy, informed Tilly, who, acting

upon his suggestion, and in revenge for the trick Dreghorn and I had played him during the preceding night, now resolved to turn our presence and services to account.

The advanced guard halted at the distance of two musket-shots from the bridge of Saxe-Lauenburg, in front of which stood a solitary sentinel of Wilson's picquet, in the very centre of the roadway. The bridge was ancient and narrow, with high parapets; but as the cannon and musketry of the castle could rake it with deadly effect, it was of the utmost advantage to Tilly that the bridge should be crossed and the gateway passed without an alarm; thus he had cruelly resolved on destroying the sentinel, a project which the circumstance of our being his prisoners, and the dense darkness of the night, greatly furthered.

The whole country around us was deserted; the Croats had captured or shot all the wayfarers and straggling peasantry: thus, neither my comrades under Major Wilson in the castle, nor their guard at the bridge, had the most remote idea that Tilly's troops, more than thirty thousand strong, were in their immediate vicinity. The major had been desired to rely on Herr Otto Roskilde for information as to the enemy's movements, and that worthy, whom we now know under another name, had completely deceived him by tidings that the Imperialists had fallen back towards the Weser.

Still, dark and unbroken by a ripple, the broad and starless current of the Elbe poured through the arches of the bridge; the opposite bank was veiled in obscurity, all save the upper ramparts of the castle, which we saw standing forth in dark outline against the gloomy sky, and towering high above the level landscape. Not a sound was heard; the most deathlike stillness prevailed, and the whole current of life seemed as still and turgid as the waters of the Elbe.

Tilly's leading column had halted for more than an hour, and we knew not till afterwards that this great general delayed the attack until he had consulted an augur as to his hopes of success, and his confessor as to his prospects elsewhere, in case of being shot; thus he poured into the ear of Father Ignatius d'Eydel that confession which he always made, if possible, before engaging. Apart from his host, at the foot of a blasted oak by the wayside, the terrible John de Tserclä was on his knees, bareheaded and in the dust, before a brother of his order.

Escorted by the same soldiers, who now guarded some Walloons in addition, Dandy Dreghorn and I were seated near the wall of a ruined cottage; around us were our guards, leaning in silence on their arms. Dandy was occupied at supper on some meal, which (during our march) he had contrived to secure and prepare. He offered me a portion, but I declined; so he sup

alone, talking all the while, that no time might be lost, for he made every meal with the air of a man who expected never to make another.

"Thou incorrigible glutton!" said I, "can you eat thus, when these overwhelming forces are about to assail our poor comrades in yonder small castle?"

"Od, sir, I dinna see that it will mak meikle odds to them, whether I tyne my supper or no!"

"Upon my honour, Dandy, eating is quite a science with you, I perceive, and abstinence would be mere want of taste."

"I aye eat whan I can, for I kenna whan or whar the neist cogue may come frae. I took some groats frae an auld trooper's siddlebags at the last halt, and made thae braw sawans o' them before he kent they were tint; and sae I squatted mysel' doon here to sup withouten fear o' a hecklin. I daursay there's some braw soorocks in the burn yonder, if we could only find them. 'Stolen waters are sweet, and breid eaten in secret is pleasant,' saith Solomon, and he was a wise auld buckie, for a' that he had as mony wives as an Imperialist; but this water," he added, producing a leather bottle from his plaid-neuk, "is baith stronger and sweeter than Solomon's. It's the real stuff! hae a drap yoursel, sir."

I took a few mouthfuls, and then returned the leather bottle to Dandy, who, after pouring the remainder down his throat, with much mock politeness handed the flask to the corporal of escort. That sulky commander finding it empty, kicked it away with great contempt, and was drawing the ramrod of his carbine to chastise my companion, though fettered, when an armed cavalier appeared beside us on horseback. It was Albert Count Kœnigheim.

"You must follow me," said he; "the generalissimo requires your presence."

"In this dusty dress?" said I, jestingly.

"Tush!" he replied, "a soldier is a companion for a king in any dress. I fear, sir, when you see Tilly, you will not jest. Corporal, bring these prisoners this way."

These prisoners; it was a very unpleasant sound: besides this lover (or intended lover) of Ernestine's spoke so gravely, that I had immediately some unpleasant anticipations. Nor was I deceived. Stumbling forward in the dark, over prostrate hedges and ruined garden walls, among neglected furrows and unsown fields, we reached the right flank of the advanced guard, where, sheltered from the view of those in the castle by a thick group of trees, Tilly stood in the centre of a number of steel-clad cavaliers and officers, whose bronzed visages and long mustaches were revealed by their open helmets, and the dim light of a

stable lantern, which hung upon a demi-lance stuck in the earth. With his meagre figure cased in half-armour and buff with tassettes descending almost to his withered knees, half propping himself against his long sword with one hand, and grasping with the other a baton and the bridle of his horse, Count Tilly stood a little in front of his picturesque staff. There was a diabolical smile playing upon the lines of his thin wan mouth, though none was twinkling in his deep and fiery eyes, which searched the hearts of all.

"Welcome, thou jackfeather gallant!" said he in German, making me an ironical bow, to which I replied by another, haughtily enough; while Dandy, who kept close to me, saluted him as well as the fetter which chained his hands together would permit.

At that moment a tall red plume towered above the crowd of helmets; the group near Tilly parted on each side like the waves of the sea, and the stately Count of Carlstein approached with a fiery gleam in his full clear eyes—a cold and freezing expression of anger on his Grecian brow and finely-formed upper lip.

"Ah—my camp-master general," said Tilly, with another ironical bow; "in searching for rats at your new castle in Lunenburg, we found other vermin, as you may see."

The count bit his nether lip, but did not reply; and it was perhaps fortunate for him, that I (remembering Tilly's observations about treachery) had contrived, during the march, to explain to the aide-de-camp how we happened to be concealed in that apartment last night.

"Señor Bandolo," said Tilly.

That meritorious individual immediately appeared among us, in his large cloak and brown Dutch hat, with a cockade which was Danish on one side and Austrian on the other. Undisguised scorn was expressed by every face present, save that of the unscrupulous Count of Merodé, of whom more anon.

"Bandolo," said the general, "describe what you have seen."

"An officer, who wears an *eagle's wing* in his helmet, with a sergeant and fourteen musketeers, guard the gate which closes the other end of the bridge, and is, in fact, the outer barrier of the castle." (I listened with eagerness; this officer was evidently Ian.) "A single sentinel is posted at *this* end of the bridge."

"It is narrow, you perceive, gentlemen," said Tilly.

"And troops will be long in defiling across it," added the Count of Carlstein; "and will moreover be exposed to great danger, as ten heavy culverins and a bombarde from the castle can sweep its whole length."

"Señor—you have seen the advanced sentinel?"

"I could have pistoled him, but feared to alarm the guard," growled Bandolo.

"There is no sconce at *this* end of the bridge, as at Boitzenburg," said Tilly; "it is fortunate! But it is of the utmost importance, in case the arches should be undermined, that we capture the guard without alarming the garrison in the castle. This can only be done by deceiving the sentinel; and if one of these prisoners will lead an armed party to the gorge of the bridge, and reply to the challenge, in his own barbarous language; on one hand I offer him a thousand pistoles, with free leave to enter any regiment in the Imperial service; and on the other, instant death, and such a burial as the wolf and raven give. Sir—officer! translate this to your fellow-prisoner," he added to me, with a terrible frown.

"Dreghorn," said I, after translating the request, "what answer shall we give him?"

"Tell the suld tyke, that we'll baith see him hanged first—yea, high as Haman, and that *then* we wadna do it!"

"Count Tilly!" I exclaimed; "is this the honour—this the faith of an Imperial soldier?"

"Faith!" he retorted, "and dost thou speak to me of faith? Did not a council of our church, more than two hundred years ago, declare that *no faith should be kept with heretics?*"

A cloud came over the faces of the Counts of Carlsstein and Koenigheim.

"Generalissimo," said the former, "what is this you would do? Assassinate a poor soldier because he will not betray his comrades? What! is the cause of the Empire and of Catholicism fallen so low, that we must become bravoos and murderers?"

"Darest thou to dictate?" cried the little man, grasping his baton tighter, while a dark gleam shot from his fiery eyes; "dost think that I who have never shown mercy to the Flemish and German followers of Luther and Calvin, will mince matters with this Presbyterian spawn of their worthy colleague, Knox? No—nor will I now, so help me God; and, by my part of paradise! may the boom of our cannon sound everywhere as the funeral knell of those accursed Protestants—this unshriven spawn of Scotland, of Denmark, and the devil. They are your countrymen, count—true, but remember that on the brows and on the banner of your nation are written the curse of heresy, and the crime of sacred blood—the blood of a cardinal-priest, and that blood is yet unrevenged!"

"Lord hae a care o' us! what a deevil o' a body—what a bull o' Bashan!" muttered Dandy, as Tilly spurted out his fury in crackjaw German, though he usually swore in Spanish.

"Will this fellow obey my orders, if *you* will not?" he asked, with increasing wrath.

"He treats your offer with the scorn that it merits," said I.

"Maldicion de Dios! then stab him to the heart, Bandolo!" cried the merciless Tilly.

The unfortunate Dreghorn seemed to comprehend this terrible order; for, as the unscrupulous rascal raised his poniard, Dandy wrung my hand, and then in the old Scottish fashion mantled his head in his plaid, even as Cæsar veiled his in his toga, to hide the death-stroke and its agony.

At that moment poor Dandy Dreghorn, the humble ploughman—the private soldier—was sublime! He was the grandest figure amid that stately group; but I caught the descending arm of Bandolo with one hand, and dashed him to the earth with the other.

"Do yer warst, ye dour auld walydraigel!" cried Dandy, shaking his fettered hands in Tilly's startled face; "I maun een dree my weird, syne ye gar me thole't!"

"Lead them both forward to the bridge," said Tilly, who was literally choking with passion. "To thee, Bandolo, I entrust them; six Croats will follow you; blow out their brains, if they refuse to *reply* that *friends* are approaching. The report of your pistols will be the signal for crossing and making a general assault. The regiments of Camargo and Merodé will lead the van; for, as Wallenstein says, God always helps the strongest brigade—forward!"

We were dragged away by Bandolo and the six dismounted Croats, all of whom were men of that amiable docility to orders, that they would have shot their own fathers without the slightest scruple, had such been the pleasure of Count Tilly or their prince, the Ban.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CAIEN NA CUIMHNE!

I SECRETLY resolved that, whether I was shot or whether I escaped, a pretty loud alarm should be given; Dandy Dreghorn was of the same opinion, for, notwithstanding his strong predilections for porridge and good feeding, he was a brave fellow, and vowed to stand by me to the last. Being aware that Bandolo knew neither our Scottish language nor the Gaëlic, we were resolving how we could bring both him and Tilly into a trap of their own constructing as we approached the end of the bridge, almost groping among the dark and smoke-like vapour, which was now beginning to spread along the river and over the deserted town and the castle which commanded it.

At the gorge of the bridge I could perceive a Highland soldier standing perfectly motionless, resting on his musket, and apparently gazing straight before him into the obscurity which veiled the army of Tilly. His powerful form had the aspect of a dusky statue. I could perceive his plaid waving at times; he was whistling a monotonous pibroch as we crept softly towards him; then he chanted a song; and doubtless the thoughts of home it raised within him turned his eyes and heart back—as it were, back upon himself—and prevented him from observing the group of Croats who approached him so stealthily, with their carbines cocked, under the shadow of the Dutch willows that fringed the narrow pathway. I have said the whole place was still as death; thus the clear manly voice of the clansman as he sung “Failirin, ilirin, iulirin O,” was distinctly heard. That old Highland air is so sad and slow, that it moved my heart within me, even amid the fierce impulses of that most critical hour.

“Not the swan on the lake, or the foam on its shore,
Can compare with the charms of the maid I adore;
Not so white is the snow on the mountain or dale,
Or the wild rose that blooms on the bough in the vale.
As the clouds’ golden wreath on Ben Lomond’s high brow,
The locks of my loved one luxuriantly flow;
And her cheek has the tint our wild roses display,
When they blush in the bloom of a morning in May.”

“Dreghorn,” I whispered, “that is Gillian M’Bane, one of my own company—a Strathdee man! My God! what shall I do?”

“Let us baith set up a yowl, sir.”

We still crept forward, and after a pause Gillian sang another verse of that tender old love-song; while my heart beat quicker, and my breath became more and more contracted.

“Like thy star, oh, Ul-lochlin! that beams o’er the grove,
Are the slow-rolling eyes of the maid that I love;
High bosom’d, her girdle diffuses the light
Of the moon, when she beams on the ocean at night.
The lark and the linnet, they welcome the morn,
In a chorus of joy from yon time-gnarled thorn;
But the linnet and lark pour their choros in vain,
When the maid that I love sings her sweet Highland strain.”*

Suddenly he perceived something, and, pausing again in his song, blew the match of his musket, and cried in his native Gaelic—

“Stand!—who comes here?”

Bandolo raised his pistols and blew the matches; then a sound

* Translation from the original Gaelic, by Dominic Daidie.

followed, as the Croats, who crept like snakes along the ground, imitated his example.

"Speak!" said he in a fierce whisper to Dreghorn and to me. He spoke in broken German, with a word or two of Spanish, and placed a pistol to each of our heads. I felt the cold muzzle against my left temple. My heart stopped—then there was a terrible conflict within it; but I knew the narrow path that honour required me to pursue. Again the sentinel challenged, and cocked his piece.

"Maldetto! will you speak—or you?" growled Bandolo.

"No—never!" said Dreghorn; "not to be made king o' a' braid Scotland—Heevin bless every inch o't!"

"Maldicion!" howled the bravo, gnashing his teeth.

"Treachery, M'Bane!" I shouted in Gaëlic; "treachery, treachery! The Imperialists are upon you! *Cairn na cuimhne!* Claymore and biodag!"

There was a red flash as he fired his musket, and a Croat fell beside me, kicking up his heels in the dark; two pistol-shots followed, and, shot through the brain, poor Dandy Dreghorn sank dead at my feet. I thought myself also slain—for an instant all was chaos! I fell across his body, yet fortunately my cheek was only scorched by powder, while the ball had grazed my helmet, but with sufficient force to knock me down. My escape was miraculous, and Bandolo deemed me shot when I fell on the roadway, and luckily for myself, close to a small recess in an abutment of the bridge, where I lay unobserved; for to advance would be to fall a sacrifice to the fire of my comrades, who with Ian guarded the gate of the bridge; to retire, would be to perish among the ferocious Imperialists.

Firing a volley through the loopholes of the archway, the Highland guard closed the klinket of the well-barricaded gate, and retired double quick into the castle; and now began one of the grandest scenes of war I ever had the fortune to witness! From the high ramparts of the gothic fortress there burst upon the midnight gloom and on the narrow bridge a flood of light, with a storm of cannon-shot and musketry.

"To the assault! to the assault! and death be the doom of the first who turns his back!" cried Tilly, rushing on foot across the bridge at the head of his pikemen, with a standard in his left hand, and a horse-pistol in the right; for the old Jesuit, though he trembled last night before an antique picture, and had implicit faith in quacks and astrologers, was brave as a lion. "Forward, my hardy rogues! there are a hundred hogsheads of good wine in yonder castle—all the spoil of the heretical Bishop of Hildesheim. On, on brave cavaliers and valiant pikemen! Remember that every blow of your swords and thrust of your pikes

is beheld with joy by the mother of God! Strike for the good cause! thrust for the blessed cause! Strike and thrust for the Cross and the Empire!"

The hoarse hurrah of the German infantry, the yells of the Croats, and the chivalric war-cry of the Spaniards, replied to his urgent address.

"Santiago! Santiago! and close, Spain! Viva el Conde Tilly! Viva Juan de Tserclä! Viva el Espiritu Santo!"

A flood of armed men—the regiments of Merodé and Camargo—poured along the bridge against that gate, which formed the only barrier between them and the fertile and unravaged provinces of Saxe-Lauenburg, Holstein, and Denmark, and they rushed impetuously against it, their pioneers being in front with axes and sledge-hammers, petards and levers. Other corps followed, column after column, with all their bright points and up-lifted pikes gleaming in the blaze of a *light-ball*, which (by Major Wilson's orders) was now burned on the summit of the castle, and which poured a torrent of dazzling radiance on every object. This engine (so useful for revealing the position and number of a foe at night) is usually a large bomb, filled and covered with powder, saltpetre, turpentine and rosin, well rammed with birchwood charcoal, and covered by innumerable coats of paper steeped in melted pitch.

On the grey battlements of Lauenburg this blazed like a comet, and enabled the Highlanders to direct their fire of musketry from the parapets above, and the Barbette batteries below—so named because, in their passage, the shots from them shave the cope of the rampart. The shower of missiles that swept the bridge was terrible! Two great basilisks, or 48-pounders, loaded with musket-balls, did frightful execution, while the enormous bombarde vomited stang-balls, or shot with double-heads, having fourteen-inch bars to connect them; these shred away whole ranks of men, who, as they crowded upon the bridge in their eagerness, impeded the operations of those who assailed the gate.

"Cairn na cuimhne!" rang at times above the uproar from the castle wall. I thought I could detect the voice of Ian; for it was the war-cry of the M'Farquhars—their *Cairn of Remembrance* on the hills of Strathdee.

The yells, cries, and tumult upon the narrow bridge were appalling, and almost equalled the din of the fire-arms and artillery in Lauenburg. What a contrast now was there! ten minutes before the stillness had been like that of a desert, unbroken save when the solitary sentinel sang, or when the wind shook the rushes of the Elbe, and swept along its darkened waters with a moaning sound.

A thick mist arose from its bosom, and on that mist fell the

ghastly and sulphurous glare, amid which—yet half in obscurity—were seen the columns moving to the attack, like troops of spirits, with their armour and weapons gleaming as if tipped with blue fire, among that cold white vapour.

Down from the lofty rampart, lighting up its grim architecture of the twelfth century, poured that torrent of flame, revealing every object, even to the checks in the tartan plaids of the Highlanders; larger it grew, broader and brighter, until every ornament and stud upon the coats-of-mail were visible. The whole fortress was illuminated; the spire of Saxe-Lauenburg, the houses and their windows, the rolling mist, the broad river, and its clumps of pale green weeping willows and dusky copper beeches; the advancing columns with their umbered arms and rustling banners; the stormers on the bridge, swarming and swearing, jostling and crushing forward over the dead and dying, and uttering yells of rage and defiance whenever a cannon-shot made a lane of carnage through their living mass, were fully and fearfully visible.

Surmounted by the demi-eagle of Anhalt rising from its ducal crown, before them lay the old archway with its deep dark mouth, having a false portcullis jagged with iron teeth, flanked by the Barbette batteries, and swept from innumerable loopholes of the casemates, from the recesses of which red streaks of fire and wreaths of pale blue smoke—blue even amid that pallid glare—burst forth incessantly, as the radiance of the blazing fireball enabled the Scottish musketeers to direct their deadly aim with precision and security.

At last this light from the castle began to subside and die away; but just then the Austrian petardiers blew up the Anhalt gate, and half their number with it; the din of hammers and axes followed; then another wild shout of triumph, and the musketeers of Merodé, the pikemen of Camargo, and the Croats of Castanovitz, with the whole of Tilly's column, began to pour along the bridge, through the shattered archway, and entered the duchy of Saxe-Lauenburg.

The Scottish major had undermined the bridge; but the powder found a vent somewhere, and the chamber was fired without effect; then a triumphant shout of fear, derision, and defiance arose from the soldiers of the Empire! the Rubicon was passed; the passage of the Elbe achieved, but with great loss; and the castle was immediately outflanked and environed on every side.

Column after column—horse, foot and artillery—defiled along the bridge, until the whole main body of the Imperialists had passed, but not without severe loss; for my brave comrades fired incessantly until their bandoliers were empty, and their

cannon had become so hot, that to cool them they were compelled to cease for a time; and then, on day breaking, the gallant Lowland cavalier who led them, finding the castle invested on every point, craved a parley by beat of drum, and through the intervention of Tilly's aide-de-camp, and of his confessor, Father Ignatius d'Eydel, an influential Jesuit, obtained permission to march out with all the honours of war, and to retire without molestation down the right bank of the Elbe, to the fortress of Glückstadt.

While these arrangements were being made, I again became a prisoner, having been discovered by some Croatian women, who, in the twilight of the morning, had been stripping the killed and wounded on the bridge, and using their knives freely on the *latter*, if they resisted. Some of those wretches were on the point of assassinating me for the lace and jewels of my Highland garb, when a corporal of Reitres knocked two of them down with the butt-end of his carbine, and committed me to the care of Tilly's quarter guard. Escape was now impossible, and I feared to offer bribes, lest these unscrupulous soldiers might deprive me of Ernestine's purse, as well as its contents.

Exactly at sunrise Major Wilson came forth with his little garrison, and two regiments of horse, with standards displayed and kettle-drums beating, were drawn up to salute the passing Highlanders. With one pipe playing, two drums beating the *Soots March*, and the major's own standard bearing the Lion Rampant displayed, they marched down from the castle, not quite two hundred strong, but a grim and determined little band as ever waved their tartans in the face of an enemy. Their faces were blackened by dust and powder, and most of them had bandages about their heads, their arms, or sturdy bare legs; but they all marched past, like brave fellows as they were, looking at the iron line of Tilly's Reitres as if they cared not a pinch of snuff for them.

With a heart that swelled within me, I stood among my escort by the wayside, and recognised many a face as my comrades passed. The first company was Captain Mackenzie of Kildon's; the next was Ian's—the stately men of Strathdee; and I saw him, with his arm in a sling, marching at their head, and those colossal sergeants, Phadrig Mhor, and Diarmed M'Gillvray, each with his enormous Lochaber axe, keeping close by his side—and Red Angus M'Alpine too, with the crape on his arm in memory of his secret sorrow. Had uncounted gold been mine, I would have given it for the power to rush into their ranks and claim their friendship and protection; but I was an unransomed prisoner of war, and they dared not receive me. I caught the eye of Ian as he passed. He grew pale with astonishment; then he red-

dened with joy and indignation; the M'Farquhars uttered a shout, but were compelled to march on; yet Ian sprang from their ranks and wrung my hand.

"God bless you, cousin Philip!" said he, "we thought you were gone with poor Learmonth and Martin to render Heaven an account of our good service in Germany."

"Rollo," added M'Alpine, hurriedly, "we cannot tarry a moment! We march by the way of Hamburg; a wood lies some twenty miles distant, near Bergedorf; escape, if you can, and some of us may meet you thereabout on this side of Glückstadt—farewell!"

They sprang back to their places, and marched on; but many a face was turned backward, and many a hand was waved to me in kindly recognition, till I lost sight of them, as the Reitres wheeled into broad squadrons to follow and cover their retreat.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE JESUIT.

RETAINING ten thousand men under his own command, Count Tilly immediately despatched the Counts of Carlstein and Merodé, with the remainder of his force, along the banks of the Elbe, with orders to turn the flank of all King Christian's outposts; after which they were all to reunite, and advance again to the conquest of the Danish isles.

Devereux's Irish regiment occupied Lauenburg, where the German pioneers buried the dead in great trenches, and many were quite warm, with the blood still oozing from their wounds when flung in. The vast depth to which they dug these pits excited my surprise, and I was informed by Count Kœningheim that it was, "to prevent any vampires who might be among the slain ascending to upper earth;" for I found that, from the frightful atrocities of the Imperial troops, they had the most implicit belief in these imaginary monsters, and supposed that many were in their ranks.

Several prisoners, who had incurred Tilly's displeasure for various reasons, were now selected by the sergeant of the quarter-guard, and put aside for hanging at sunset. To my horror, I found *myself* placed among these doomed men! I remonstrated with the sergeant with all the earnestness of one whose life depended upon his own exertions, assuring him that I had done nothing worthy of a death so detestable.

"Very well," said he coolly; "make some interest with an officer, and we may shoot you instead—forward, escort!" and we

were marched to a small open shed, which stood under some large trees that grew near the river. Against one of these trees stood a ladder, and Bandolo, who on this occasion had constituted himself assistant to the provost-marshal, superintended the arrangement of certain cords, having ugly loops thereon, from the branches of the trees. My fellow-prisoners were six Croats and two Germans. They were all tied with cords; the Croats sat on the ground in sullen silence, glaring at their guards from under their fur caps and savage elf-locks; the two Germans had smoked themselves into a state of dreamy indifference, and sat with their lacklustre eyes fixed on the flowing river. Around us, the soldiers of the escort were quietly cleaning their arms, rubbing down their horses, and cooking their rations on a large fire (composed of tables, chairs, &c., taken from a neighbouring house), previous to marching.

Though I could face death in any form when encountering him in the ranks, with the colours above and my comrades beside me, to die thus was a very different thing. To be left hanging like a dog or a thief from the branch of a tree (though the sergeant assured me "it was a most respectable gibbet")—I, a gentleman and soldier, in the manly garb of my native country—to die thus—and to die without a crime! The reflection was intolerable!

But there was not one to whom I could apply for mercy or for succour. Count Carlstein had marched, and Kœnigheim had gone, no one knew whither.

Devereux's Irishmen cared nothing for me. I was not their countryman; besides, I had not the means of communicating with them.

As the day wore on, with an agony which cannot now be written, I watched the summer sun verging to the westward, and shedding along the whole bosom of the Elbe its bright evening beams, throwing far across the river and its bordering meadows the lengthening shadows of every spire, and house, and tree; for as still, as glassy, and waveless as ever, the stream flowed on towards the German Sea—the same sea that washed the Scottish shore. The sun sank lower and lower; the days were then long, and the landscape was flat; yet it was within an hour of setting.

Only an hour!

I sprang up, and walked to and fro with an air of perturbation which I could not conceal; but which my phlegmatic German guard viewed with the most perfect indifference. A torrent of bitter thoughts poured through my heart; I had quitted a home where none regretted me, with the hope that all I left behind should one day be proud of my actions, and might boast of my

glorious death if I fell in battle or siege—but now the noose was waving over my head! I felt that it was impossible for me to meet such a death, and so unmerited, with resolution or with resignation, and without a struggle—a desperate struggle—if not for liberty, at least for revenge. It was better, a thousand times better, to die sword in hand, and be hewed to pieces, than to be hung like a pitiful marauder.

A weapon! I saw none save in the hands of the strong guard which surrounded us, laughing and jesting through their bushy mustaches, just as if nothing unusual was to happen, and nine poor devils were not to be hanged at all.

While full of these bitter thoughts, I perceived a man whom I knew by his attire to be a priest of the Order of Jesus—one of the many who followed the army of Tilly—walking slowly towards the trees whereon the fatal nooses were dangling, and at the foot of which the Croats and Germans were seated in sullen and listless apathy.

He stooped down and addressed them all in succession; but they cursed and bade him begone “to the devil.” Then he paused, with the air of one who conferred with himself whether it were worth while to continue so ungrateful a task; and, after some hesitation, he approached and gazed at me from head to foot.

His thin, tall figure is yet before me. Worn evidently by asceticism and conventual severity, he stooped a little forward; his forehead was broad and impending; his features were harsh, while a prominence of mouth and chin indicated more firmness of purpose than mildness and benignity—yet, in many respects, his face belied the good man’s disposition. His eyes—keen, penetrating, and hard in expression—inspired awe, and commanded respect from all on whom he bent them; but their decided expression belied the humility with which he crossed his bony hands upon his bosom, and humbly bowed his head even unto the most humble.

Educated a Presbyterian, and being the soldier of a Protestant king, I gazed with some distrust at this brother of that order whose name excites so many jealous feelings, and which has been so obnoxious to the princes of Europe generally; for in my own time I have seen the Jesuits, as the result of their intrigues, expelled forcibly from Venice and Prague, from Naples and Flanders.

He halted before me, crossed his hands upon his breast, and slightly bent his lofty figure.

“Your servant, reverend sir,” said I in my own language.

“God be with you, my son,” he answered in the *same*. I had used it inadvertently, but now my attention was excited, and I

gazed at him inquiringly. "I am sorry," he continued, "to see a Scottish gentleman in this sad predicament."

"I fear me, good sir, your regrets will not mend the matter much," I replied sourly, for the most intense hatred of the Imperialists was swelling in my breast; "you cannot do anything for me, I presume."

"Perhaps not—I am only poor father Ignatius."

"The confessor of Count Tilly!" I exclaimed, thunderstruck; "pardon me, sir—I have often heard of you."

"For little that is good—if in the Danish camp."

"Nay, sir; even there I have heard you spoken of with respect, as the possessor of a thousand virtues."

"Though a Jesuit—'tis wonderful! Though I am known as Ignatius in the Order of Jesus, at home, in poor old Scotland, I was kent but as David Daidle, the neer-do-weel o' the parish schule, and son o' auld Davie o' the Daidleysheugh, at the Rollo's Craig. Ye see, gude sir, I've no forgotten our auld Scottish whilk my puir mither taucht me."

"How!" I exclaimed, clasping both his hands in mine; "are you the brother of my old Dominie Daidle, at home in dear Cromartie?"

"The same—the same!" he sighed, with a flushing cheek and a kindling eye; "my brother did become a dominie; but I, with James of Jerusalem, and Father Lealie, now superior of the Scottish College at Douay, became followers of Ignatius Loyola. But my puir brother—when saw ye him last?"

"But a few months ago; the poor dominie plays the fiddle as well as ever, and still leads the choir of our parish kirk. I promised to bring him from Germany the object of his greatest ambition—a metal horologue, which he is not likely to receive, however," I added, glancing at the setting sun, and the noose which dangled over my head.

"Young gentleman, it seems to me as if your face was familiar to me, and your voice, too; yet I must have left old Scotland years before you were born. You are a son of our father's laird and patron, Rollo of Craigrollo?"

"Compelled to become a soldier of fortune, because of a certain unlucky heirloom——"

"The Rollo spoon," replied the Jesuit, a broad smile spreading over his usually grave features; "I remember well that quaint heirloom of old Sir Ringan; I remember, too, with gratitude, the many favours your family have for ages bestowed on mine, the hereditary vassals of your house. Oh! I would gladly repay but one of these, if in my power——"

"You can more than repay them all, sir, for indeed you owe us nothing. If we did service to the dominie's family, they did

good service to ours. Whose sword hewed a farther passage into Huntly's pikemen, at Glenlivat, than old David Daidle's? I am to be hanged in ten minutes—hanged like a dog, because I have done my devoir as a soldier against these rascally Imperialists, and would not betray to them my kinsmen, the M'Farquhars. If you can save me——"

"Save you!—I can and will——"

"There is but little time, then; for, by my soul, yonder come Bandolo, the bravo, and the provost-marshal, with his guard and assistants, carrying the fatal ladder, by which they mean to accommodate us in mounting the branches of these high trees."

"Follow me, Mr. Rollo; and let me see who will dare to interrupt you."

The soldiers fell back and presented arms to this well-known and formidable priest, who was as familiar to the armies of Tilly as the terrible Father du Tremblay was then known in those of France, but in a very different way—for every good and not for every evil. Like his master's, the will and command of Ignatius d'Eydel (for so had they rendered his homely name) were as much law to the soldiers as if the cruel thin lips of Tilly had expressed them.

As we passed the provost, he respectfully saluted the priest, who stood by my side, in his long flowing garments. Bandolo scowled at me with rage and disappointment, but was compelled to pass on, leaving me untouched. I remembered the cruel murder of poor Dandy Dreghorn, and could scarcely keep my hands from his throat; but hoped that an hour of retribution was coming.

After walking in silence along the road for some hundred yards, on looking back I saw the convulsed bodies of my eight recent companions dangling from the trees, while the provost and his guard retired leisurely towards their quarters in the town of Lauenburg.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OF THE GOOD DEEDS OUR MUSKETEERS WERE UNDOING.

My heart sickened at the thought of all I had so providentially escaped, by the casual intervention of a passing priest.

"Come, master Rollo," thought I, as gayer ideas suggested themselves; "you must not deem these Jesuits such bad fellows after all! Indeed, this one seems remarkably amiable. Reverend sir," said I, as we passed the extreme outposts of Tilly's troops

and proceeded along the margin of the Elbe, "I hope you will not incur the Count's displeasure by setting me free."

"Displeasure—oh, no! My brother, John of Tserclä—for I presume you are aware that he is a priest of our order—cannot quarrel with me for a trifling act of mercy like this."

"This *trifling* act has saved my life; but you value existence lightly on the Imperial side of the Elbe. I am full of joy and gratitude for the service you have rendered me; but why, good sir, do you seem so much dejected?"

"I am, indeed, dejected and sorrowful—exceedingly sorrowful!" he replied, folding his hands heavily upon his breast, and bending his eyes upon the ground.

"For what, good sir?"

"To see my own countrymen arrayed in tens of thousands against the good cause. Ye are come to uproot and destroy that tree of knowledge whose leaves were faith, and whose fruit was life everlasting; that stately tree which, in other times, our pious countrymen from the holy Isle of Iona, in the far west, transplanted among the barbarous Goths of Germany. For hither in those dark ages of the world, from our old Caledonian shore, came Boniface, who, after converting all the savages of Thuringia and Saxony, became first Archbishop of Mentz, as we may find in the writings of Trithemius. While his Scottish disciples founded the noble abbey of Fulda, Patto (also a Scot) converted Westphalia, and was made Bishop of Verden. In the 8th century, St. Robert, the son of a Scottish king, converted Theodo, lord of Bavaria, with all his people, and is now the apostle of their descendants; while Callum Bane and Gallus of Argyle rescued Swabia from the darkness of paganism; and the latter ceased not from his blessed labours until he perished among the Switzers, who yet preserve his reliques in the convent of St. Gall; and all these things ye are come to undo! Nor need I tell you how John the Scot became Bishop of Mecklenburg, and died a martyr, being slain by the Wendish apostles, who, in 1066, cut off his hands and feet, leaving this man of godliness to perish miserably by the wayside; or how, in the year 1000, Callumanus, the son of a Scottish prince, converted all Austria, where he was martyred, and where his reliques are yet preserved in the convent of our countrymen, near the Scottish Gate at Vienna. Argobastus," continued my companion, warming with enthusiasm and reckoning on his fingers—"Argobastus, the converter of Strasburg, and William who founded a Scottish monastery at Cologne, another at Nuremberg, another at Aix-la-chapelle, two at Ratisbon, and another at Würzburg, were also Scots, as we may read in the writings of Baronius and Trithemius; and all these blessed works ye are come from the same land, with your muskets and bandoliers, to undo! Virgilius the

Scot, was made perpetual legate of Germany by His Holiness Gregory VII.; nor need I expatiate on the piety, the virtues, and the suffering of Kilian, the Culdee of Iona, who converted all Franconia; and that ye are come to subvert and undo! Oh! why seek to convert these lands to heresy and heathendom by the sword? with drums beating and banners displayed? Why not try it, like the Scots of other times, with no other weapons than the staff and the sandals—prayer and exhortation?"

"By my faith, reverend sir, a salvo of good cannon-shot is the best exhortation for such a congregation as Tilly and his Croats," said I; half stunned by the vehemence of the Jesuit, and the facility with which he enumerated so many barbarous names. "My good father and countryman," I added; "we came hither neither to convert like the Scots of old, nor to persecute like Count Tilly. But we are come to fight the battle of those who cannot fight for themselves; to win honour and fame like true cavaliers, to clip the wings of the Austrian eagle, and to defend the civil and religious liberties of Northern Europe—a high and a glorious mission!"

"To overturn the faith of God!—the church which is founded on the rock of ages, and is cemented by the blood of many a martyr. Oh! were you to see, as I have seen at Melck, the body of our countryman St. Colman, undecayed, uncorrupted, pure and fair, as on that day in the year 1012, when, after returning there barefooted from Jerusalem, the barbarians hanged him on a tree, where he swung untainted by the weather, and untouched by the ravens, until the good Bishop of Aichstadt conveyed his reliques to Alba Regalis, upon a mountain in Hungary, where they have converted many by the miracles they work daily; but all these good and wondrous things ye are come with your pikemen and musketeers to subvert and undo!"

"By Jove! Father Daidle, I do not think the corbies would have respected me as they did this good man; but sure I am, that so far as toil and fasting go, our poor Scottish soldiers endure now as much as ever your Scottish saints did in the olden time, though not so patiently perhaps; as we can relieve our minds, now and then, by a good round oath."

The Jesuit paused, and said gravely, as if displeased, "Here we part, sir. I free you as a countryman, though as a heretic, and the soldier of a heretic king, I should have left you to the mercy of the provost-marshal."

"Do not be chafed by my heedless way, good sir," said I, glad to perceive that the close of this long harangue had brought me to the verge of a small wood. "I owe you more than I can ever repay—more than I can ever express—my life—my honour!"

"I would gladly give you a horse (though your kilt is scarcely

suited for the saddle), but I possess only a poor ass for the march."

"Why not mount yourself better? I saw nags enough and to spare, among the Imperialists."

"It would ill become us to ride chargers, when our Master, who is in heaven, contented himself with the humbler animal, and in memory thereof marked it with his cross. If you escape all the dangers of this disastrous war, and return to our common home by the shore of Cromartie, bear my blessing to my poor brother, the dominie—for, alas! it is all the poor Jesuit has to send him. Keep the path that is before you; by it your comrades marched this morning—it leads straight to Hamburg, and to Glückstadt—farewell."

We separated—

He to return to Tilly's disorderly cantonment, and I to pursue my solitary way.

Book the Sixth.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE MERODEURS.

FROM the place where I parted with Father Ignatius, Lauenburg was about three miles distant, and the Elbe about one. The dusky evening was giving place to duskier night. At a little distance from the road lay a German village, with two or three large, old, and crumbling houses overhanging the narrow thoroughfare, and a number of picturesque little cottages, built of dark and intricate wood-work, carved and plastered. The coppice or wood near me was composed of lofty beeches, which fringed a small and quiet lake; a large misshapen block carved with ancient Runes stood among the long grass, and between the stems of the distant trees, I saw the moon rising afar off, and shedding a soft pale light upon the hazy landscape.

One or two small stags flitted past me, and a solitary stork flapped its large wings on the branch of a hawthorn-tree. Everything was silent, and the place was so lonely that I sat down on the Runic-carved stone of other times, to reflect on my position.

I was seventy miles at least from Glückstadt; my comrades were a full day's march—thirty miles—in front of me; and though they, by force of numbers, could make their way in safety, I knew the case was different with an individual; for the officers and soldiers of our regiment, who straggled far from camp or quarters, were frequently maltreated, and even murdered by the savage boors, for the sake of their military finery.

Though permitted to retain my back, breast, and head-pieces, I had been deprived of my sword and dirk, yet fortunately my skene-dhu, which was of course stuck in the garter of my right leg, had escaped unseen, and my sporran or purse had a curiously constructed mouthpiece or clasp, containing four small pistol barrels, which were cocked by the pressure of one spring, and discharged by the pressure of another. This remarkable piece of Highland mechanism had been a gift from Ian, and was the work of Thomas Caddel, whose manufactory of pistols at the Doune of Menteith, was soon after to become so celebrated. To

this clasp and its deadly secret, I more than once owed my life. I kissed the velvet purse of poor Ernestine, and sighed to think I should never behold her again; I examined my skene-dhu, and was about to commence my journey, when several soldiers suddenly appeared at a short distance off.

Sinking softly down among the long grass, and enveloping myself in my green plaid, I lay still and scarcely breathed, as they passed close by me, hewing at the bushes with their brandished swords, drunk, swearing, and intent on outrage. By the colour of their doublets I could perceive they were musketeers of the Count de Merodé's regiment—a band so infamous for cruelty, that in its members first originated the now familiar term marauders—from *Merodeurs*. Their colonel, a brutal and licentious noble, was afterwards slain by John de Wart, a colonel of irregular horse; but from his outrages, and those of his soldiers, in the capture of provinces and sack of towns, the name of Merodé will ever be remembered with abhorrence by the maids and mothers of Germany.

Expecting nothing but instant death for the value of my accoutrements if discovered, I was happy to find that the ruffians passed me without observation, and bent their steps towards the adjacent village, between two green hedge-rows which concealed me from them; I then sprang up, threw my plaid across me, grasped my black-knife, and commenced my long and solitary journey towards Glückstadt.

As I walked quietly away, the noise of pistol-shots and screams announced that the *Merodeurs* were committing some outrage upon the quiet and unoffending villagers; and by a blaze of light that shot up between the trees, it was evident that several of the cottages had been set on fire.

I was now in the territory of Saxe-Lauenburg; and, being aware that its duke, Rodolph Maximilian, served under Tilly as colonel of horse, and was one of the six brothers of that gallant House, all of whom fought in this war of aggression, I felt somewhat dubious as to my chances of escaping all the boors and peasants, his vassals, whom I was certain to meet before reaching the territory of Hamburg, over which I knew that King Christian claimed sovereignty as Count of Holstein.

I suffered excessively from hunger and thirst; the excitement so recently undergone conduced greatly to increase the latter, and being aware that if refreshment was not soon procured at all risks, the whole night would assuredly be passed without it, I resolved to put a bold face upon the matter, and, entering the first village I came to, knocked boldly at the door of a house, on the front of which swung a sign, bearing an eagle of a colour so undecided that it could not fail to please all the troops who, by chance or misfortune, might happen to march that way.

The host was somewhat surprised to behold me; but, bustling out my plaid, I swaggered in with an air of unconcern, and ordered supper to be laid for myself before my *comrades* came in. As this indefinite term might have referred to the whole Danish army, the host bowed to the very rosettes at his knees, and summoned Karoline, the jungfer or waitress, to attend me. Such was the wholesome terror imparted by the announcement of approaching troops, that in their anxiety to please I had host and hostess, jungfer and ostler, all attending me at once. Candles were brought; a joint of cold meat, with a piece of clean white paper twisted about the end, by which it was to be grasped for carving; eggs, cheese, snow-white bread, strong waters, and Danish beer, were all brought with edifying celerity, and I supped sumptuously. Dismissing all my attendants, I retained only the waitress, a pretty girl of Holstein, the bright expression of whose merry blue eyes announced a decided disposition for coquetry.

"Come, jungfer," said I, my spirits rising as I began to feel comfortable; "you will take a little glass of wine?"

"I would rather be excused—the Herr looks so wickedly," said she, hesitating.

"My pretty Karoline—that is your name, I believe—what you call wickedness is mere admiration. It is a way we soldiers have—that is all."

I kissed the pretty waitress in a soldierlike way, and she seemed no way displeased; I was giving myself all the airs which I had seen the Baron Karl, Major Fritz, and others play off with such ease in similar places, when the host put in his round stupid face to say that he "heard the drums of my comrades approaching!" I had no small trouble in concealing my discomposure at this strange intelligence, the source of which was in the good man's brain alone; for his fear of soldiers had conjured up the distant sound of drums, though drums are seldom beaten at night, and never by marching troops. But I immediately rose to depart.

"Tis my friends," said I, putting on my headpiece.

A dollar for supper, four more for an old rapier which I bought from the host, were paid, and I walked anxiously to the door. The night was calm, and no sound broke the stillness of its starry sky or of the landscape, which slept in the pale splendour of the August moon.

"I am going to meet my comrades," said I.

"What may their force be, Mein Herr?"

"About two thousand."

"Two thousand!" reiterated the host; "Mein Gott! they will eat us up."

"Eat you up, rogue! I think not, if they pay you as I have done, with rix instead of slet dollars."

"You have paid like a prince," said he, bowing. "Two companies wearing the same garb as Mein Herr passed through the village about noon—but they behaved like honest gentlemen, and paid for everything."

"That is the way to Korslack, is it not?"

"That is the way you have just come, Mein Herr," said the host, with surprise.

"Ah! true—how stupid of me to forget!"

"As the Herr has been so kind," said he again, "perhaps he will escort Karoline past these troops, so far as the pathway which leads to the little chapel of St. Patto; she has to adorn the altar with flowers for service to-morrow; and, perhaps, she will be safer there, too——"

"Than in a village among soldiers—you think right. But you put great trust in me. May I not run off with her?"

"I know that the soldiers of King Christian are not like our Imperialists. Ah! Mein Herr, do you imagine I would make such a request of one of them? It would be setting the wolf to guard the lamb. Besides, the Herr has an expression of so much candour."

I bowed; for the confidence this stranger placed in me was the highest compliment I ever received. In a little hood and cloak, with a large basket of beautiful flowers on her arm, the jungfer accompanied me through the village, pausing every two or three paces to hearken for the rat-tat of the drums, which, she said, "had ceased." I walked on by her side, well satisfied with myself; for being well supped, having a good sword in my belt, and a purse in my pocket, I felt that I could have faced the devil; and strutted on, chatting as gaily to my pretty companion as if I had been lord of all Lauenburg.

At the door of his inn the host stood watching us until we reached the end of the street, where a little wicket gave admittance to the narrow lane that led to the chapel of St. Patto. There I bade my little devotee adieu, with proper gallantry; and, glad that my brief halt had terminated so pleasantly, walked on quickly by the highway that led to Korslack, a town which lay something less than eighteen of our Scottish miles distant. I resolved to pass beyond it, and not halt again until I reached Bergedorf, in the territory of the quiet and industrious Hamburgers, where I expected to find comparative safety.

After the keen and varied excitement of the last day or two, there was something soothing and pleasing in this solitary night march through a strange and foreign country; and, like a kaleidoscope, my mind was full of ever-changing thoughts and figures as I journeyed on.

Midnight came.

I had passed through several little villages of grotesque old houses, but they were buried in silence, as their quiet inmates were asleep. Not a sound was heard in them but the occasional bay of a watch-dog, the boom of a stork's wing overhead, or the solemn chime from the ivy-clad spire of an old gothic church; and I reflected with a sigh on how soon,—to-morrow, perhaps—fierce Tilly's lawless Croats and Merodé's musketeers would carry rapine, murder, and a thousand crimes through these rural and sequestered districts.

A white gauzy mist overspread the sailing moon; a light shower fell—just sufficient to lay the dust; and then a rich fragrance arose from the teeming earth, from the dewy flowers, and from the tossing leaves. Again the moon came forth unclouded, and the shadows of the fleecy vapour were seen chasing each other across the fields of ripening corn.

I had walked about ten miles, when far behind I heard the hoofs of horses ringing on the hard-beaten road; and the fear of being pursued, or overtaken by some patrol, made me look for a place of concealment; for by the light of the moon I could discern two horsemen, diminished to mere black specks on the far-stretching roadway. Close by me was a large beech-tree covered with dense foliage; no better place of concealment offered; and, clambering in, I hid myself among the branches.

In less than two minutes the riders came near, and, slackening their pace as they approached, reined up their blown and foam-covered horses immediately below my lurking-place. They were bareheaded—one had a sword in his hand; the other grasped a pistol.

"It is useless, Gustaf," said the last, in whom I recognised my late host of the Eagle; "quite useless, my poor boy! The vagabond Scot cannot have had time to accomplish this dreadful deed, and thereafter proceed this length on foot. We must long ere this have overtaken him."

"Karoline—my poor little Karoline!" sobbed the young man; "to perish thus!—Heaven—Heaven—cruel Heaven! There were two wounds in her bosom—here—here—just here! poniard wounds—"

"Had the villain but murdered her alone, Gustaf—"

"My Karoline!" said Gustaf, letting his reins fall as his hands sank by his side, and the tears ran over his cheeks; "so pure—so happy—so merry!"

"The Scot carried a poniard."

"The assassin!"

"All these Scots of King Christian carry poniards," continued the host. "Oh, Gustaf! I was indeed mad to trust him; but he had such an honest look. There must have been a fearful

struggle, Gustaf; for in her hands there were fragments of a man's lace collar, and I think the Scot wore one."

This was true. I had one over my gorget, or rather part of it; the rest having been rent away in some of my recent scuffles.

"There *was* a figure before us on the road. Now, where has it vanished to?"

"Ah! if it should be the Scot," said Gustaf, "and concealed not far from us!"

"In that tree, perhaps."

"Fire your pistol into it."

"Come down, murderer!" cried the host of the Eagle.

"Come down, thou vile Merodeur!" added the young man, as they each cocked a pistol. My heart beat like lightning. It was evident that they spoke at random; but both levelled their pistols, and fired right among the foliage. The balls whitened the branches as they crashed through the leaves, without touching me; I sat still as death, waiting for the next act of this desperate drama, and feeling a violent inclination to let four bullets fly at them in return, from the pistol-barrels concealed in the lock of my sporran.

There was a pause as they reloaded, during which the young man, Gustaf, wept bitterly.

Some frightful crime was undoubtedly imputed to me! The poor girl whom I had left a few hours before had been most barbarously murdered, and these men, her lover and her master, had come in pursuit of me; but I felt assured that to come forth and attempt any explanation with men so excited, and so prejudiced against me, would be recklessly throwing away my life. Her hands held the fragments of a man's ruff, and *mine* was torn—but by the hands of Tilly's soldiers. Honour then required that, at all risks, I should no longer lurk within earshot of those who imputed to me a crime so terrible, and I was just about to descend when the lover exclaimed furiously—

"I can never return the way we have come! On—yet on—for my heart is on fire!" and, spurring their horses, they galloped away at headlong speed, and were quickly out of sight.

The next moment I dropped from the tree, and paused with irresolution. My first impulse was to return to the village, though ten miles distant, and confront my accusers; my second reflection urged me to continue my flight, as the chances of mercy from the exasperated peasantry on one hand, and the Imperialists on the other, were very slender. Striking across the fields, I made a detour to the right for the purpose of avoiding the high-road; about that time the waning moon became enveloped in clouds, and I found myself on the borders of a wood.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE HUNTER'S COT.

I HAD lost the path, and knew not which way to turn; yet the necessity for action made me walk hastily forward in the line which seemed parallel with the road I wished to pursue; but on becoming confused among the trees and thickets of large bushes, I lost the way irretrievably, and stumbled on through the wood, deprived of the waning moonlight, and even that of the stars, while having, moreover, to fear the wild animals, and other denizens of a more dangerous character, who usually haunt the German forests.

After pursuing a narrow path for nearly half an hour, I came to an open space where the trees had been cleared away, and in the centre of which stood a hut of the most rustic description.

Four trees, yet rooted, formed its four corners; the walls were of spars with the bark on; the roof was composed of planks covered by bark and moss, with large stones placed at intervals to keep down the eaves, and make the whole erection steady; while above the little doorway, which was almost buried under a mountain of sweet honeysuckle and wild roses, a deer's skull and antlers were elevated on a large pole, and served to inform me that it was the dwelling of a huntsman.

After some hesitation I knocked, and though the hour was unusually late, or rather early, the door was opened almost at the first summons, for a huntsman is as easily roused as a soldier. Before me stood a man half dressed, blowing the match of his carbine, and viewing me narrowly from head to foot.

"Your business, *Mein Herr*?" he asked, with surprise.

"I have lost my way, and will reward——"

"*Handsomely*?"

"Ay, *handsomely*, any one who will be so kind as be my guide," I added, surprised at his parenthetical remark; "will you do so?"

"That depends upon which way yours may be," replied the fellow, gruffly, lowering his carbine.

"My way is the road to Bergedorf."

"Are you sure it is not Bredenburg? there were some of your countrymen in garrison there yesterday."

"Nay, Bergedorf, I tell you!" said I, becoming impatient at the fellow's incivility.

"You are nearly four miles from the direct road, and could never find it alone; but if you would choose to pass the night, or rather, I should say the remainder of the morning, with me,"

will gladly set you on the right road for a draught of beer at the first tavern."

"That would not be a very handsome reward," said I, entering; "so you are not an Imperialist, then?"

"I am nothing but the humble servant of Mein Herr, and, being under the authority of Duke Rodolph Maximilian, care not a jot either for the King of Denmark or the Emperor Ferdinand."

"But your lord serves under the banner of Austria."

"I have no lord," replied the hunter gruffly, as he shut the door with a bang that shook the cottage; "I am an enemy to all lords—I am a free forester, and own no master. Der teufel! what between the taxes of the Duke, the knights of Ertemberg, who would hang us for shooting the deer, and the bishops of Anhalt and Bremen, who would burn us because we will not go to mass, life is not worth having, save in the woods, where one is free."

The interior of the hut was as rude as its exterior had promised. In a small chimney built of rough stones a fire was smouldering; on the plain wooden table something like a cold supper of meat and bread, with beer, in one of those large glazed bowls which come from Muscovy, was standing, as if waiting a belated visitor; and by the smoky oil lamp that hung from a rafter of the roof, and shed a light over the rudely constructed and humble edifice, I could perceive that, under his bushy eyebrows, my host scanned me frequently in a scrutinizing manner, which, to say the least of it, was very unpleasant.

His bearing and expression were by turns full of oily civility and sullenness; his figure was strong and athletic—short, and somewhat bow-legged; his head and face were large, and the latter had a very unprepossessing cast of features; the nose of a hawk, wide cracked lips of a livid colour, teeth like fangs, but coated with tartar; a low brow overshadowed by a forest of hair, and ears partly shorn off—in their mutilation announcing most satisfactorily the reason of his aversion to the bishops, knights, and lords of the district. In short, he was hideous.

"I fear I have disturbed you, my friend," said I.

"Not in the least—make no apologies, I pray you. All night I have been waiting for a friend who is journeying from Bredenburg to the castle of Lauenburg. Here is his supper, of which you may partake if you choose, and then pass the remainder of the morning on these deerskins, or in that poor bed in the little room within."

"Many thanks, woodman," said I; "though not much used to luxuries of late, I shall be but too happy to accept of your little bed."

"The Herr may please himself," he muttered gruffly.

"At what hour of the morning do you usually set forth?"

"In these woods all hours are alike, Mein Herr—say six."

"But I have not a horologue, and how shall we know?"

"When the sun shines between the forked branches of a tree opposite, I know, at this season, the hour of six."

"I have five hours to sleep, then—fail not to waken me, and when we pass the boundary of the Hamburg territory I will give you all I can afford at present—ten rix-dollars!"

"'Tis a bargain—I will not fail," he replied, as a deep gleam shot over his sullen eyes, and he ushered me into a little room, where, setting down the light, he left me. The bed was little better than a palliasse, filled with dry rushes or straw, spread upon a sparred frame; but to me, who had slept so often on the bare ground in my belted plaid, and when hunting had slumbered on the winter moors, till my locks were frozen to the whitened heather, even that palliasse was a luxury; and after laying against the door a few large billets of wood, to prevent ingress without my knowledge, I was about to extinguish the light, when several stains of blood upon the floor—blood recently spilt—arrested me; but the quarters of a deer which hung in a corner seemed sufficiently to account for them.

I blew out the lamp, and threw myself upon the truckle-bed to sleep.

Familiarity with danger certainly deadens at times the keener sense of it; and *now*, when reflecting upon the adventures of that morning, I can perceive that my position was full of perils, which sufficiently indicated themselves. Far from my comrades, close to the Imperialists, solitary and alone, I had entrusted myself to a foreign outlaw, a man of whom I knew nothing, save that his ears had been shorn off by a common executioner—the half-savage denizen of a German forest, who in my sleep might slay me for the value of my jewelled brooch or gilded corslet.

The small aperture which in the daytime lighted the inner room of this little log-hut, overlooked the dense obscurity of the forest, and was securely fastened by a crossbar of oak. Retreat that way was impossible, even had I thought of looking for it; but that idea never occurred to me, for suspicions scarcely suggested themselves. Thus I lay placidly down to sleep, and the monotonous rustle of the forest leaves, and creaking of the laden branches, soon nursed me into the land of dreams.

I had slept about two hours, when one of those convulsive starts which come so unaccountably in one's sleep awoke me to all my energies. I heard a noise in the outer apartment, and through the roughly-boarded partition saw a light shining into the darkness around me. The sound of hoofs were heard, and several men dismounted at the door of the hut.

I sprang up, and, placing my eye to the partition, behe'

through the aperture Bandolo, the spy, enter, accompanied by three soldiers of the regiment of Merodé, who immediately attacked the platter of victuals, and drained by alternate draughts the wooden bowl of beer.

I gave myself up for lost!

"Well, Bernhard, my jovial *schwindler*, here we are at last!" said Bandolo, adding, with a mighty oath, "and a rough ride I have had of it from Bredenburg. (Give me a glass of strong water.) I have just left Dunbar, the Scottish major, there. He will not surrender, he swears, while he has breath to draw; and begs King Christian to relieve or reinforce him, as the post must fall (some beef, Bernhard), and as the respectable Hausmeister, Otto Roskilde, I bear his urgent letter to——"

"To the Danish king?"

"No; to Count Tilly!" said Bandolo, with a loud oath and a hoarse laugh; "the old Scot may wait long enough for succour. If I could respect any quality but wealth, I should certainly respect his valour. He gave me six doubloons to carry this letter to King Christian!"

"Six doubloons!" muttered the Merodeurs, whose eyes sparkled at the idea of such a sum being in the pockets of a man who was within arm's length of them.

"When I give it to Tilly," said Bandolo, speaking with his mouth full, "he will pay me six doubloons more—happy dog! Maldicion de Dios! I shall retire from business some of these days, and buy me a count's patent in the Electorate of Hanover. The avenues will all be blocked up to-morrow night, and the poor old fool of a Scot, who trusts to me as the king's messenger, will be deceived by me, as Count Tilly's friend."

"Friend!" reiterated the Merodeurs, with a roar of laughter.

"Then the Scot will be taken," said Bernhard.

"Nay," said a soldier of Merodé; "he may be taken dead, but never alive. I am one of Tilly's old grumblers, and have met with this ironheaded Scot before. He will never surrender—but I remember me, Bandolo, he was too free in giving thee wine at Bredenburg."

"Ah! when I said that Tilly was retreating towards the Weser—Hollo, Bernhard, another cup of the strong water!" Bandolo swore in German and Spanish alternately, though he was disguised again in a brown hat, a black cloak, and false paunch, like the well-fed Holsteiner, our old Hausmeister at Glückstadt. "Drink, Bernhard, drink!—to the amiable and generous Count Tilly, who hath the face of a rat with the heart of a tiger! Drink to the eternal perdition of all Protestants, my merry Merodeurs, and to the continuance of this glorious war, which pours the doubloons into the pockets of Bandolo, who will ere long give you all a right

welcome to his county in Hanover! Drink, drink—or, maldetto! I will dash my glass in the face of the first who refuses!”

“Hush!” said the forester, with a prolonged whisper, laying a hand upon his mouth, and pointing towards the little chamber I occupied.

“Hush—why? is there any one there who knows me?”

“No.”

“I am glad of it—for I am becoming such a well-known rascal! but have you women there? if so, you must lend me another ruff, for mine was torn to rags overnight.”

(My heart beat quicker! I remembered the story of the village girl's death, and that her clenched hand retained the fragment of a man's ruff or collar—and now I saw that Bandolo's broad lace one, of point d'Espagne, was nearly all torn away. This ruffian—this bravo—the assassin of poor Dreghorn—this man of a hundred murders—had just added another item to his frightful list of atrocities!)

I was pondering whether or not his false paunch was pistol proof, while my host whispered something rapidly in his ear. The wretch set down his glass, and grew red and white by turns.

“'Tis he—'tis my man!” said he, in a low thick voice, as he arose and hung aside his cloak.

“Who—who?” asked the Merodeurs.

“A prisoner who has escaped from Tilly's quarter-guard—a scurvy Scottish musketeer. He knows me, Bernhard, and has recognised me frequently. Thus, if once he reaches the Danish lines or garrisons, I can never act the spy and befriend the Count Tilly again; for I tell you all he has discovered me—and must die! Por Vida del Demonio! I have killed many a better man before this, and shall I,” he added, with a satanic smile on his fierce Spanish mouth, “shall I leave in my path this adder, whom I can crush with so little danger—here in Bernhard's hut—far from help or succour? Has he pistols?”

“No—nor dagger; for of course I looked well,” replied the forester, in the same low voice.

“We have pistols and daggers,” said Bandolo, as he and the three Merodeurs unsheathed their long poniards, and examined the edges and points of the keen broad blades, which gleamed in the lurid light of the smoky lamp. Its rays fell on the dogged visage of the forester, on the bloated and ferocious features of the Merodeurs, browned by exposure, fringed by black beards, and seamed with the scars of battle and brawl; and on the face of Bandolo, whose eyes gleamed with cruelty, and whose lips were compressed with determination.

It is impossible for me to describe my emotions during this conversation, every word of which I had heard with a painful

distinctness, which has impressed it upon my memory. I was single-handed against five! Resistance, though it might revenge, could never save me. The window was a fixture; the door I had not the means of barricading; and the roof of bark and planks, against which I thrust with all my strength, was too solid for a single hand to move. My goatskin Highland purse, the gift of Ian, with its four concealed pistol-barrels (though each of them was not bigger than a man's middle finger), could alone save me—and the ruffians thought I was without pistols.

I seized the clasp of this priceless sporran. I pulled the spring, cocked the secret locks, and placed my skene-dhu between my teeth. Then, while these five men, intent on wanton murder, were in the very act of examining their weapons, I softly opened the door, and, by a single turn of my hand, fired the contents of four barrels right amongst them, and then with sword and skene in hand, dashed through in the smoke, and gained the outer door.

It was all the work of a moment!

Two Merodeurs had fallen wounded, and so completely were the third, Bandolo, and the forester taken by surprise, that I had time to give the spy a back-handed blow, which broke his right arm, and thereafter reach their horses, which the Merodeurs had stolen, and which were fortunately standing close by, with their bridles thrown over the broken branch of a tree.

Though kilted, and in no way prepared for riding, I sprang across the saddle of the first nag that came to my hand, and, dashing at random along the forest road, was soon far from the hunter's cot—that almost fatal trap in which I had so witlessly enclosed myself.

Thus, between the sunset and sunrise, I had thrice narrowly escaped death.

Avoiding by something like a miracle the vast forces of Tilly, who were then moving on to capture Bredenburg, I reached Hamburg in safety. Long before this I had let loose the Merodeur's horse; for, being aware that it was stolen, I feared suspicion or discovery if found with it in my possession.

Thus, I could not overtake Major Wilson's party, as they were a full day's march before me on the Glückstadt road.

Though anxious to reinforce the gallant Dunbar of Dyke at Bredenburg, their honour was pledged to refrain from hostilities until they had reached the place mentioned in their capitulation, and thus the poor sergeant-major was left with only four hundred of our Highlanders to contend with a column of the Imperialists, ten thousand strong.

This column was led by Tilly in person, and it invested on all sides the town and castle of Bredenburg, the principal strong-

hold of the Counts of Rantzau, a noble and warlike family of Holstein. I heard the cannonading on my right hand, while proceeding on my solitary way; but I only learned the frightful slaughter when I rejoined the regiment.

Whether owing to Bandolo's treachery, or that King Christian remembered our quarrel about the Scottish and Danish crosses, and omitted wilfully to send succour, I knew not; but succour never came; and Dunbar refused all terms, vowing that "the Scots, who never feared the Romans—nathless what that liar Hegisippus said—would never surrender to Germans or Spaniards, while they had breath to draw!" and this answer will be found in the *Amsterdam Courant*.

The place was stormed on all sides; and old Dunbar, who maintained the breach for nearly an hour with his two-handed sword, was killed by a musket-shot, and every one of his brave Scots were put to the sword, save Ensign William Lumsdaine, who escaped by swimming the wet graff.

Before Captains Carmichael and Duncan Forbes, with the last of the four hundred, were slain, nearly a thousand of the Imperial dead were piled up within the slimy fosse.

Our Highlanders all died like good soldiers and true; for, of the four companies who perished there, three were composed of the very flower of the great Clan Chattan.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

I OBTAIN A COMPANY OF MUSKETEERS.

THE Imperialists were rapidly penetrating into Holstein, and everywhere the troops of King Christian were falling back before them; the Lords Nithsdale and Spyne with their Scottish battalions, the Count de Montgomerie with his regiments of French Protestants, were all retiring, and the advance of Wallenstein, who was marching out of Hungary with his powerful army to reinforce Tilly, promised to lay prostrate for ever the pride and power of Denmark. Yet the heart of the gallant Christian IV. never failed him; and in that ferocious and desultory war, his little army of thirty thousand Danes, Scots, and Germans, disputed hand to hand every inch of the ground over which they were compelled to retreat.

* The Imperialists on this occasion shamefully mutilated the body of Dunbar. "They ripped up his breast," according to Colonel Munro; "tooke out his heart, sundered his gummies, and stuck his heart in his mouth; they also killed our preacher, who, being on his knees begging life, was denied mercy."

When beaten from one castle or town, they garrisoned the next; and thus the Imperialists, whose natural brutality was inflamed by fanaticism and exasperated by resistance, committed the most atrocious cruelties upon the poor inhabitants—carrying fire and sword, death and devastation, wherever their drums beat, or their banners waved.

At Hamburg I met with Major Fritz, of the Sleswig musketeers, with whom I travelled to Glückstadt in his coach, a comfortable vehicle, covered with carving and gilding, and made by Heinrich Andersen of Stralsund, in Pomerania, the same person who obtained a royal patent from James VI. to run a stage coach between Edinburgh and Leith. Andersen was then the most famous coach-manufacturer in Europe.

Glückstadt was almost the last fortress in the German states possessed by Christian IV. There my comrades received me with a true Highland welcome, and the warm-hearted Ian embraced me like a brother—as one recovered from among the dead. Some changes had taken place since we were last in that city.

The large house of the spy in the Platz was now converted into a barrack for the Laird of Craigie's pikemen, and old dame Krümpel had been turned adrift, to resume her former occupation of fish-fag. The theatre had been turned into a cavalry stable for the Baron Karl's pistoliers, to the great satisfaction of old Dübbelstiern, the burgomaster, who was a strict Calvinist, and professedly hostile to all such amusements.

All the troops were marched to church, to join in solemn prayer for the success of their arms against the foe, who was now almost at Hamburg.

"We pray earnestly to Heaven for success," said the Baron Karl to me in a low voice, as he leant with a lounging air against one of the shafted pillars of the great church; "Tilly and his Jesuits are probably saying solemn mass for the success of *their* arms also."

"How is Heaven to judge between us?" asked Major Fritz, whose mother was one of the principal ladies at the Imperial court.

"Come now, Fritz," said the baron; "do not be staring at that lady in a way so peculiar."

"Excuse me, gentlemen," said Fritz, slipping from among us; "'tis a little beauty I met at Hamburg."

On seeing the major approach, the lady, who was elegantly dressed, but, according to a dangerous custom then fashionable, wore a black velvet mask, retired from the church, and Fritz, who in such affairs was undaunted, followed her. After having been in camp for some time, he had a great desire to make some

important conquest among the fair sex. His innamorata, who looked round at him slyly from time to time with two bright eyes, seemed to be the little wife of a citizen, and, to a half worn-out rake like the major, there was something excessively attractive in the pretty white stocking, drawn smoothly over the handsome leg and ankle, which she shewed from time to time, when holding up her silk dress. The major followed, stroking his short mustache, and saying a hundred fine things, to which she responded briefly, and by bursts of laughter—for so he afterwards told us; but she led him a devil of a dance through all Glückstadt, and to the barrier of the Hamburg road.

"I did not think Glückstadt contained a neck and ankles half so pretty," lisped the major; "but upon my soul, little one, I don't think I am very wise in following you so far."

"It is better to be happy than wise," replied the lady, in her soft low voice.

The musketeer was enchanted.

"Ah—if I could only see its pretty face!" said he.

"Come with me to Pinneberg, and you may."

"That is only twelve miles—I will go with you to the end of the earth."

"A long way, Major Fritz," laughed the lady.

"The deuce, my pretty one, you know my name!—we are acquainted, it seems." Again the little mask laughed immoderately, and the major thought her the merriest conquest he had ever made. He handed her into one of Heinrich Andersen's hackney coaches, and, just as the gates were closing, they drove off for Pinneberg.

The major was confounded by all the charming mask told him of his most secret affairs; the amount of his income—his expectations from his uncle, the Baron of Uberg, and his cousin, the Count of Flensburg; his love adventures, too, were all known to her—it was very perplexing! Pinneberg was reached—the major proposed they should alight at the door of a celebrated restaurant, but the lady declined peremptorily, and he was compelled to let her please herself. They stopped at the door of a charming little house; the servants were richly liveried, the vestibule lighted and carpeted. She led him up stairs, into a magnificent apartment, where a cold collation—wine, fruit, crystal and plate—lay on a spotless table-cloth, under the perfumed light of wax candles, placed in beautiful girandoles.

"I am dying with curiosity," said the major; "do tell me your name, or at least show me the charming face I have come so far to see!"

The lady took off her mask, and he beheld his own mother—the Baroness Fritz, of Vibürg, who he thought was at Vienna.

The old lady laughed heartily at the trick she had played, and repeated all her son's soft speeches over again. At first he was ready to sink with mortification—then he uttered a shout of laughter; but the most serious part was to follow. The old lady—for, notwithstanding her youthful figure and grace, she *was* very old—told him that she had come all the way from Vienna to Glückstadt, for the purpose of entrapping him, and bringing him over from the allegiance to the paltry Count of Holstein (Christian IV.), that he might enter the Imperial service, where higher honours and greater rewards awaited him than could ever be obtained by adherence to falling Denmark.

"I am extremely sorry, madam, that it is quite out of my power to gratify you," replied the major, as he walked towards the door. "Ah! treacherous old devil!" he muttered, on finding himself confronted by six or eight of Camargo's stoutest pikemen.

By this trick, and his own folly, he was made a prisoner, and carried away to Vienna; after which, for a long time, we heard no more of him.

After a four days' halt, the companies of Major Wilson were commanded to march with all speed to the upper Elbe, with orders to cross into Silesia, and join Major-general Slammersdorf, who, on that side of the river, was maintaining a desperate and desultory struggle with the Imperialists.

"Dioul!" said Ian, as, with our pipes playing, we marched from Glückstadt on a dark foggy morning, about the end of August; "Heaven be praised we are again out of this dull solemn town, with its high bastions and deep ditches, where the slime floats and the frogs squatter in the mud—its dull canals and duller streets—its fat burghers and close-clipped trees. I would give a bonnet-full of silver for one glimpse of a dark pine forest or a steep heather mountain; for there is nothing about us but what is flat and stale as Rostock beer."

"M'Farquhar, are the pretty market maidens—those blooming Holsteiners, with their red petticoats and handsome legs, their bright eyes and rosy cheeks—all as nothing?" asked M'Alpine.

"Yea, as less than nothing to me," replied Ian, as he fastened his graceful plaid with the brooch of Moina, and began to hum his favourite song, "The bonnie brown-eyed maid," and shook the great eagle's wing which adorned the cone of his helmet; "I should be sorry if they made me the more pleased with Glückstadt. Believe me, cousin Angus, I shall never—if I can avoid it—do aught that will cause me regret!"

"Or remorse—you are right," muttered M'Alpine, as a cloud passed over his face, and he adjusted that broad scarf of crape which he had made a vow to wear to the last of his days.

We had no idea of how we were to reach Silesia, as Tilly's

troops lay partly between us and that country (of which the Emperor is duke, as King of Bohemia); and Wallenstein, against whom we were advancing, had just succeeded in driving into Hungary Count Mansfeldt, that great leader and champion of the Bohemian Queen, who was compelled to sell his baggage and artillery, and disband his soldiers, after which he retired to Zara, where he died of a broken heart. Christian, Duke of Brunswick, died about the same time, and the unfortunate King of Denmark was left single-handed to cope with the two greatest generals of the German empire.

On came Wallenstein, and he poured his army, one hundred thousand strong, like an irresistible torrent, into Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, and Silesia; General Slammersdorf was there irretrievably beaten and outflanked. The Danes and their auxiliaries, Scots and Germans, now retired from all their outposts along the Havel, the Elbe, and the Weser; and Wallenstein prepared at once to carry the war into the heart of Denmark.

We received these startling tidings from the Baron of Klosterfiörd, who overtook us at Horst, with a despatch from the king, ordering Major Wilson to change his route, and with all speed join the remnant of Slammersdorf's defeated army, which was intrenching itself at the Isle of Poel, being almost cut off from the king, who was then retiring out of Holstein into Denmark, with his main body, abandoned by his former allies, the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and the electoral Duke of Brandenburg.

The remainder of our valiant regiment were with Sir Donald Mackay, under Slammersdorf, and our hearts yearned to be with them, that together we might stand or fall in the good cause of Denmark; for, remembering the glorious struggles of our own native country for that freedom which we transmit to our posterity, unfettered as we received it from our Celtic fathers, we had a sincere interest in seeking by our valour to defend the Danes from the mighty masses of the aggressive empire.

If these Danes proved staunch to their fatherland, we had no fears for Denmark or its king. Our own history has shown us how, against greater powers than those of the Imperialists, Scotland has preserved her name, her nationality, and her liberty, amid the wars of long successive ages, since that remote time when her frontier formed the boundaries of the Roman empire on the west, and all who dwelt *beyond were free*.

One sword drawn for freedom on the slope of the Grampians has ever been worth a thousand in the ranks of the invader; for God will ever aid a people fighting for their liberties, and the land he has given them.

We were sixty miles distant from the Baltic, and Tilly ha

actually pushed forward his advanced posts between us and it shore; yet we pressed on, and passed the whole distance in an incredibly short time; for we could usually march thirty miles a day, though our soldiers carried knapsacks or clothes-bags like the Swedes.

We saw nothing of the Imperialists but the smoke of burning villages, which rose at the verge of the flat horizon, and served frequently to indicate where their ravagers were at work; but they were so far off that our men never once unstrapped the hammerstalls from their locks and matches.

Two unpleasant affairs happened to me on this march.

During a halt at Segeberg, where for a few hours we occupied the old castle which the Emperor Lothaire built to keep the Slavonians in check, I remember having a serious quarrel with Mr. Amias Paulet, an English cavalier, who had come to seek his fortune in these wars. While taking a glass of Würzburger together in a tavern, his name unfortunately led me to ask if he "was any relation to that Sir Amias Paulet, the infamous abettor of Elizabeth in her treachery to Mary, Queen of Scots?"

He bluntly told me that he was the younger son of the said Sir Amias, though a man well up in years; and thereafter spoke of our queen's memory in a manner which I, as a Scottish gentleman, considered insulting to myself. I threw my glove in his face, drew my sword, and required him "to retract;" but Gaffer Englishman, being a stout and brave fellow, declared that he "would see me in a warmer climate than Holstein before he would do so!" Upon this, I invited him to the parade, before the castle gate, where the Danish guard came forth to see the sport, and enforce fair play. There at the second pass, I ran him fair through the lungs, and, with my sword at his throat, compelled him to retract, as a lesson in future to speak mercifully of the dead, and of injured women. I left him in charge of the castellan, without having time to see to his wound, for our piper blew the *gathering* for the march in ten minutes after the rencontre, but he recovered, to die long afterwards, a prisoner, poor fellow, in the hands of the Imperialists, at the Castle of Dillingen, on the Danube.

My next little affair was nothing less than burning the head of a contumacious boor about his ears.

Marching by a road, each side of which was richly bordered by laden fruit trees, or fields skirted by wild hops wound over hedges, where the mint and the red barberry grew in the ditches, we passed a farm-house, a picturesque little place, two stories high, painted brown, surrounded by a gallery, to which a flight of steps gave access, and having a broad-eaved roof, covered with turf of emerald green.

I commanded the rear-guard, which consisted of twenty musketeers, all M'Phersons. Hot and dusty with our march, I halted, and civilly requested a draught of water for each man. This modest request the host—a sulky boor, who appeared at the door with four servants, armed with crossbows and carbines, and dressed in white coats and peaked hats—acceded to most unwillingly; for, like a true German, he looked coldly on the soldiers of Christian, because the tide of war was setting in hard against them.

Perceiving this, I demanded, instead of water, a glass of Rostock beer for every man, and, accompanied by Sergeant Phadrig Mhor, entered the kitchen of the house, where the first objects I observed were two of those many pasquils or caricatures of his Majesty James VI., which were then circulated through all Germany, in ridicule of the poor and tardy assistance he sent to his son-in-law, the timid Elector of Bohemia. One represented the king in a Scots bonnet and plaid, with a number of men striving in vain to draw his sword from its scabbard; the other depicted three armies marching into Bohemia—King James VI. of Scotland, at the head of a hundred thousand ambassadors, Christian IV. at the head of a hundred thousand herring barrels, and the States-general leading the same number of butter-firkins.

I endeavoured to deface or tear down these pasquils, upon which the farmer dealt me a blow with the boll of his carbine, that would assuredly have ended all my campaigns but for the interposition of Phadrig's axe; after which, to punish the fellow, we cleared the house, threw the grate with its burning coals into the middle of the floor, heaped the furniture thereon, and leaving the whole place in flames, hurried after our main body. It made little difference to the farmer, as the Croats would undoubtedly have burned his premises next night.

Without snapping a musket, we reached the western shore of the Baltic, and, seizing such vessels as we could find (being on the king's service), sailed through the Gulf of Lübeck, and reached the Isle of Poel, where Slammersdorf lay, with the wreck of his Silesian army, only ten thousand strong, including horse and artillery, but all resolute and well-appointed men. Our arrival there caused the utmost astonishment, for the major-general considered himself as completely cut off from all communication with Holstein; and, indeed; one day after, even we could not have reached the Baltic by the same route.

At Poel, our Highlanders were mustered under baton by Sir Donald, and were found to be about eight hundred, for so had the defence of Bredenburg, Lauenburg, and the Boitze reduced them. No less than seven hundred men had fallen in these paltry affairs since our first landing at Glückstadt.

By this sad slaughter I found myself a captain, and Ian succeeded to poor Dunbar's commission; our old patents or commissions being assigned to other cavaliers, who were on their way from Scotland with six hundred new recruits from the Highlands. On the day after our landing at Poel I carried my half pike as captain, and went through the pleasant ceremony of *presentation* to the regiment—a custom which we Scots have copied into our army from our ancient allies, the French.

The whole battalion being drawn up in line, and in review order, the colours, pikes, and drums in the centre, musketeers and pipers on the flanks, the officers in front with their half pikes advanced, the colonel, Sir Donald, bearing my new commission in one hand, led me forward with the other, fully accoutred with back, breast, and head pieces, sword, pistol, steel gloves, and dagger, and said in Gaelic—

"Gentlemen and soldiers, by the will of the king, you will receive and acknowledge Philip Rollo, of the Craig, to be captain of the company lately commanded by M'Farquhar of that ilk; and you will obey in that capacity for the good of the Danish service."

Immediately upon this the regiment presented arms, the drums beat the *Point of War*, the pipes struck up "Mackay's Salute"—the officers crowded round and drew off their gloves to congratulate me; after which we all spent a merry night in my quarters over a few dozen of right Würzburger, while my company regaled themselves on Rostock beer.

M'Alpine also became a captain, and Ensign Lumsdaine, the only survivor of Bredenburg, a gallant cadet of the family of Invergellie, in Angus, became my lieutenant.

The most pleasant feature in this promotion was, that my increased exchequer enabled me to repay to the Baron Karl the money he had so generously advanced to me in the days of my first folly at Glückstadt; for I had been sorely afraid I might be shot in action, and leave that debt unpaid.

CHAPTER XXXV.

PROTEUS AGAIN.

MAJOR-GENERAL SLAMMERSDOFF had once been one of the happiest old fellows in the Danish service; but having had the misfortune to distinguish himself at Carelia, in the Swedish war, and never having that good service requited as he thought it deserved, he forthwith became a grumbler; and "the affair at Carelia" was the pet grievance of his life. Every old soldier has

one. This martial fragment of the Danish wars had lost a leg at the siege of Elfsburg, an arm at Marstrandt, and had left his best eye with the Imperialists at Lütter, having altogether received eight wounds, three of which he was in the habit of averring were mortal.

While he employed our most skilful trenchmasters and sturdy soldiers in fortifying the Isle of Poel with ravelins and redoubts, stockades and gratts, we heard that King Christian attributed his successive defeats, and lastly, the desertion of his allies—the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel and the Duke of Brandenburg—to the secret intelligence derived by the Emperor from *behind* the Danish lines, and to the endless intrigues of Tilly, maintained by the medium of his able scoutmaster, Bandolo, whom I had so frequently encountered; and for whom, in consequence of my information and description, a strict watch was maintained throughout the whole Danish frontiers; and orders had been issued to kill him, without mercy, wherever he should be found.

"To discover this fellow will be no easy task," said our friend, the Baron Karl, as he sat with me on a gun-carriage, overlooking our soldiers who were at work in the trenches; "for he is master of several languages, and possesses a great power of visage, with a mind which, to the cunning of the fox, unites the ferocity of the tiger; he is a very Proteus, and may, for aught we know, be among us at this very moment, and in this little Isle of Poel."

"I could almost rejoice at that idea," said I; "for believe me, Herr Baron, I have a heavy account to settle with him."

"You are, indeed, particularly his enemy, and have most cause to dread him, having been the means of rendering his character first known to us, and making the king aware that Otto Roskilde, the stout and respectable burgher of Glückstadt, who resided there in time of truce, was the bravo Bandolo, the tool, the paid spy of Count Tilly. We know the man now, and that he is a source of terror even to that terrible Tilly, to Wallenstein, to Carlstein, and Merodé—to the very men he serves, and who pay him like a prince; for, though suspected of a hundred assassinations at Naples and Vienna, this subtle Spaniard has continued to elude every inquiry."

"If the Count of Carlstein was aware, as I am, of the man's presumption," said I, remembering bitterly the daring proposal he had made to Tilly concerning Ernestine, he would assuredly have him hanged."

"Hanged! what—the right hand of the venerable Jesuit!" reiterated the bantering baron; "why, this amiable individual is as necessary to the leader of the Imperialists as his soothsayer and stargazers; for we know that old John of Tserclä neve

fight a battle without having an omen of victory, or a long consultation with the stars. But, come—let us have a flagon of wine; and hark, my Fourrier, broach this beer cask for our thirsty pioneers."

The Danish baron was the beau-ideal of a soldier; his figure was tall and strong; his hair was just becoming grizzled; but his healthy brown cheek and white teeth declared his happy temper; while his broad brow and bold bright eye betrayed an open heart and fearless soul. He was a man whose fine intellects neither war nor time could destroy.

"If Bandolo," said I, "were but once covered by my pistol, he should have such mercy as he gave my poor companion at Bredeburg."

"Cousin Philip," said Ian, "a wretch so vile deserves not to die by the hand of a gentleman. And yet, good sooth! it is not meet that the blood of the humblest of our companions should dye this foreign earth unavenged."

"There spoke the true Celt!" said the baron, laughing; "but I fear me, Major M'Farquhar, you shall have many to avenge before we see King Christian's camp again; for cut off, as we are here in Poel, by the thousands of the enemy, if the king's ships do not afford us timely relief in flight, we shall have but two alternatives—to die by our cannon, or die of starvation."

To prevent all possibility of the latter catastrophe we laid the whole country under contribution, as far as Greivismühlen, in Mecklenburg; still, as the Imperial troops were pouring into Holstein, and a strong body of them under the Scottish colonel, Graham, had seized the free town of Wismar in our immediate vicinity, the chances of our ever rejoining the main army under the king, or reaching him through the duchies of Sleswig and Holstein became extremely slender.

After remaining at Poel more than a month, working constantly to strengthen the isle, and only laying aside the shovel and pickaxe to take up the sword and musket, disproving the assertion of Gustavus-Adolphus, "that, with all their bravery in the field, the Scots were too proud to work as pioneers," eight ships of Leith,* in the Danish service, came from Copenhagen to transport us to a point of Holstein where we were to land, and, at all risks, cut a passage to the king, whose circumstances were now more desperate than ever.

These orders were a source of sincere satisfaction to my comrades, but I must own to feeling a singular indifference on the matter; for it seemed that, by this removal towards Denmark, I was conveyed further from that pretty chateau in Lüneburg, and

* Gustavus had at this time seventeen Scottish ships of war in his service.—
Hepburn's Memoirs.

from Ernestine, to whom I owed so much, and whose memory came ever and anon to me with mingled sensations of gratitude, pleasure, and jealousy, for I knew not how high the Count of Kœnningheim might stand in her favour; at all events, he was her father's choice, and handsome enough to be a dangerous rival to me. Returning from the daily turmoil of the trenches to indulge in reverie, I frequently asked myself, "What am I to Ernestine, or what is Ernestine to me, that I should think so much about her?—nothing, of course." But her image was ever before me, and I pondered frequently on the distance that lay between us from Poel to the shore, and from thence to Lüneburg—a bird's flight of seventy miles—and the chances of our ever, or rather never, meeting more, were all considered again and again. I knew that I could never see her more but at the price of my liberty, and perhaps my life. This probably enhanced her value, for we are strange and perverse mortals—ever prizing that which is beyond our reach. It seemed odd to me that I should think so much of this dark-haired girl—that the interests of my heart should wander so far beyond the Imperial outposts, and that there should now be a being who excited imaginary fears and pleasures in my breast—a being of whose existence I was perfectly ignorant three months ago. "Let me fling these fancies from me," thought I; "they are absurd!"

Leaving Major-general Slammersdorf to defend the Isle of Poel with two thousand men, Bernard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, embarked with eight thousand horse and foot, including our regiment of Strathnaver, and sailed for Heilinghafen, a town in the province of Wagria (an appendage of Holstein), which forms a peninsula in the Baltic; and there, without loss or accident, on a beautiful day of September, that gallant prince landed his whole force, with their horses, arms, and cannon.

Notwithstanding the vast number of Tilly's forces, we had few doubts of our ability to force a passage through them, when led by the immortal Duke of Saxe-Weimar, the bravest of eleven brave brothers, all of whom had bled for German liberty. His valour at the great siege of Brissac, before the gates of which he was victorious in four pitched battles, where he captured four generals, and where he had no less than six horses killed under him, together with his long and desperate combat with Colonel John de Wert, have embalmed his memory in the annals of German chivalry; even as his generosity, which bequeathed his whole fortune to the wounded officers and soldiers who followed his banner, was long the theme of the veterans of Christian and Gustavus. Duke Bernard was all that a soldier should be—handsome, gallant, frank, and lavish of his means; for no soldier of any nation ever lacked money while the conqueror of Savelli and

the preceptor of Turenne had a guilder to spare or a jewel to sell.

We cavaliers of fortune adored him, and it was with the utmost exultation that, on a beautiful evening of September, as I have said, when the last rays of the sun were shining on the broad blue Baltic, on the flat green isle of Fehmarn and the narrow Sound, that we put off in boats, pulled by the blue-bonneted mariners of our eight native ships, and with three hearty cheers drew up under our colours in the streets of Heilinghafen.

War and rapine have changed the town since those days; but I remember that its houses were old and irregular—that their upper stories projected far over the lower, and had steep gables, with galleried fronts that rested on gaudily painted wooden columns. Inscriptions in Latin or German were carved upon the door-lintels to keep away evil spirits, as in our Scottish towns at home; and the droway storks, with drooping wings, nestled under the lee of the chimneys. We saw these birds everywhere perched upon trees, steeples, and house-tops; for they are considered sacred and useful, as they kill the little snakes and adders that are bred among the slime and corruption of the marshes.

The setting sun gilded the rent edges of the ruddy clouds; dotted with white sails, the Sound of Fehmarn and the blue Baltic stretched far away to the dim horizon; but few persons were abroad in the streets of Heilinghafen, though several gazed with fear and apprehension from the upper windows, as the troops passed through the town, accompanied by all the sounds of a marching army, the tramp of feet, the shrill fifes and brattling drums, the trumpets of the cavalry, and the sharp clang of hoofs, with the hoarse lumbering roll of the artillery over the hard and stony streets.

Sheathed in bright steel, with the colours of Weimar on his housings, and his mother's crest, the demi-eagle of Anhalt, on his helmet, Duke Bernard, accompanied by Sir Donald Mackay, rode at our head, mounted on *Raven*, that famous black horse which he had so often ridden in battle, which the Imperialists believed to be enchanted, and which, at his death, he solemnly bequeathed to the Count of Nassau.

His first dispositions were to order the Baron of Klosterfjord, with his troop of pistoliers, to ride at full speed towards Oldenburg, for the purpose of reconnoitring; while I, with my company of Highland musketeers, followed double quick to support him, with instructions to lie *en perdue* in a wood, which I would find some miles in front of the town.

"Now, gentlemen," said Sir Donald, jestingly, as we filed forth, "I hope you have put your worst doublets under your armour, for there will be many a helmet on the grass to-morrow."

"By my faith, colonel," replied Ian, "I have but one—my

best and worst; so, if ever it comes to the drum-head, remember, gentlemen, that Tilly's Croats abstracted my wardrobe on the Elbe."

"Yes, but will it not be rather extravagant, M'Farquhar, to be killed with diamond buckles on your brogues?" asked Phadrig Mhor, his henchman and fosterer.

"What," retorted my cousin, "would you have Ian Dhu to lie on the field without other badge than his eagle's feather to show that he deserves a deeper grave or a higher cairn than a gillie or trencherman?"

"Farewell, Sir Donald, and farewell Ian," said I; "forward, gentlemen and soldiers!" and with our muskets trailed, at a double quick march we took the road towards the pass of Oldenburg—the last road which many among us were ever to tread again.

By the time we were clear of the town, we could see the pistoliers far in advance of us, with their forked pennon of red silk fluttering on the wind, and their bright helmets flashing as they galloped to the front along the level roadway, from which the polished hoofs of their horses rolled up the smoke-like dust.

Our hearts beat high with excitement, for we expected every moment to see them rein up and halt, as a signal that the enemy's outposts were in sight; but they continued galloping on, and at last disappeared beyond that wood which had been indicated to me by the duke, and we scanned the horizon in vain for those columns of smoke, which, from burning villages and ravaged farms, invariably announced the scene of Tilly's operations, and the movements of his troops.

The ripe corn waved in the unshorn fields on each side of us; but with the moon a thick mist rose as usual from the meadows and pasture-lands, which gleamed like silver lakes through a veil of gauze. We passed a few wayside cottages, roofed with red tiles or bright yellow thatch; their owners had fled, and no places were occupied but the wooden dovecot—a perforated box, or old beer-barrel, elevated on the summit of a painted post, or on some scathed and leafless tree. Shortly after the rising of the moon, a man rode past us. He was dressed like a peasant of Holstein, in wide breeches having rows of metal buttons at the sides; a low broad hat and canvas doublet, belted with a rough baldric; coarse grey stockings, red garters, and wooden-soled shoes. He rode a strong and active horse.

"Softly, sir," said I, "a word with you."

He still rode on without attending to me.

"Harkee, fellow—dost hear?" I added, as Gillian M'Bane blew the match of his musket. Upon this the peasant turned back his horse, and touched his hat.

"Are you deaf, fellow?"

"A little, sir," said he, pointing to a bandage which encircled his head; "a Croatian sabre has laid bare my head from ear to eye."

"Are you a Dane?"

"I am of Schönburg."

"Have you travelled far to-day?"

"About three pipes," said he, taking his pipe from his mouth.

"Where did you come from last?" I asked, impatiently.

"Oldenburg, Mein Herr."

"Have you seen anything of the Imperialists?"

"Heaven be blessed, no! They would have made but a mouthful of me. I am a poor, inoffensive man—a dealer in cattle, Mein Herr. I am going to Heilinghafen."

"You will find customers enough and to spare, my Schönburger; for Duke Bernard is there in quarters with eight thousand hungry men."

The trader appeared somewhat startled by this intelligence, but politely begged me to be assured that the Imperialists had not yet passed the Stoer; and then asked if I required his services in any way, on which I thanked him, and we parted. He galloped off.

His last observations had been less brief than others; they caused something of a familiar voice and manner to flash upon my memory. I paused and looked back; he had turned aside from the Heilinghafen road, and was riding headlong through the ripe corn-field in an opposite direction, but far beyond our reach.

"Oh no!—it cannot be—and yet, his voice! Fool that I am—was I blind?" I exclaimed.

"What—what is it?" asked Lieutenant Lumsdaine and Phadrig Mhor together.

"But for his white eyebrows and beardless face, I could have sworn that was Bandolo."

"Oh—impossible!" said Lumsdaine; "Bandolo wandering here, in that way; besides, like a true German or Dutchman, he measured the distance by the smoking of his pipe. Cunning as he is, I do not think a Spaniard would ever have thought of that. It was so natural."

"True—but this man is a spy by profession, and practises all these little things."

"Dioul!" muttered Phadrig Mhor, shaking his halbert; "why did you not think of that before, captain?"

"There was a glamour before his eyes," said Gillian M'Bane in a whisper.

"No," replied Phadrig, gravely, as he shouldered his enor-

mous axe; "but the spy's *time* is not yet come; it may come with our next meeting, if the captain looks better, for the oldest man that ever lived had to die at last."

I was both ashamed and exasperated at being so outwitted by a rascal like this Spaniard.

"May my tongue be blistered!" thought I; "for, if that was really Bandolo, between his cunning and my folly Duke Bernard will never reach the main army." I remembered the accurate numerical information I had afforded, and had no doubt he was riding as fast as his horse's heels could carry him to communicate with Tilly, who as yet was ignorant of our landing.

We halted at the wood—the remnant of a venerable fir forest, covering about a square mile. I placed a sentinel in front of it, and towards the road; then we penetrated to the centre, and there in an open space piled arms, lighted a fire, and after carefully fencing it round with stones to prevent it reaching the roots of the trees, prepared to cook the provisions our haversacks contained.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A FOREST ON FIRE!

The poultry gleaned up by our foragers from the houses we had passed (*deserted* houses, remember), and the beef provided by our *Fourrier de Campement* before leaving the good ship, *Scottish Crown*, of Leith, were boiled together in camp-kettles; and while I, with Lieutenant Lumsdaine and my ensign, Hugh Rose (of the Kilravock family), and Phadrig, with Gillian McBane, and three other gentlemen-musketeers of my company, formed one little mess, the rest of our comrades formed another, and were squatted on the grass, rending the tough beef with their teeth, and cutting the fowls with their dirks and skenes, and each was as merry as a man may be whose life is so uncertain as a soldier's, and who tries to make the most of it while it lasts.

Phadrig and Gillian were both duinewassals, and when at home in Strathdee both wore the wing of the Iolar in their bonnets. Honest Phadrig had lately declined a commission in another Scottish regiment, preferring his sergeant's halbert to the certainty of rank and being separated from Ian Dhu, whom his mother had nursed, and to whom he was hereditary henchman, loving him with that strong and reverential love which none but a Scottish Celt or an Irish peasant can understand.

Supper over, we rolled our plaids about us, and, after posting

fresh sentinels at the verge of the wood, lay down to sleep on the soft dry moss and grass which grew under the thick trees of this old primeval wood—the last fragment of an ancient forest that once had spread from sea to sea.

At the same hour last night we had been breasting the waves of the Baltic.

Watching the changing features of the wood as the last embers shed their fitful light upon the tossing branches, I endeavoured to court sleep—but in vain, for the anxiety necessarily felt by every officer—especially a young one—when in charge of that most important of all duties, an outpost, kept me restlessly wakeful. I knew that the Baron of Klosterfiord was far in advance of me with his pistoliers; but then I expected momentarily to hear the sharp report of pistols and clang of hoofs upon the distant roadway, announcing that his reconnoitring troop was driven in by Tilly's Reitres.

As the few brands that crackled on our watch-fire brightened and reddened up to die away again, I lay watching the varying and fantastic shadows of the midnight wood, the gnarled trunks of whose red pines shone ruddily in the casual glow, then wavered indistinctly, and became black even as their wiry foliage, or the deeper black beyond, where the thick vista stretched away into obscurity. Above, not a star was visible; for the thick, broad branches were densely interwoven, and formed a roof, beyond which the tall black spires of the firs rose against the sky; and as the passing wind, when penetrating to the place where we lay, fanned the dying brands into a scarlet glow again, the *passing* gleam revealed the old knotty stems and branches twisted into a thousand fantastic shapes, red and black, or silver grey, like the freakish demons and stunted gnomes of Danish story, or the rude carvings in some grotesque cathedral aisle.

In the middle and dark ages, that peninsula had been covered by dark forests, in whose depths the pagan Wends, when spreading along the shores of the Baltic, worshipped their four-headed god of light; even in his own time (the 11th century), Adam of Bremen tells us, that only the shores of Denmark were inhabited, the interior being all a dark and impenetrable forest. I remembered the wild Holstein legend of the Pale Horse, which yearly bore the assassin of St. Erik the king, sweeping over hill and hollow, accompanied by shadowy hounds and the distant echoes of infernal horns, from that morass near the Eyder, where, embarrassed by the weight of his armour, he sunk and died; to the river where, in the preceding year, he had thrown the body of his murdered prince, and from thence to the royal vault at Ringsted, where the canonized victim lay. Once in each returning year, since that fatal night in 1252, the Holsteiners see

the shadowy assassin making his terrible pilgrimage to the scenes of his sorrow, his crime, and his grave, where horse and man go down with a shriek that startles the Eyder in its oozy bed.

I thought of this and many another tale, while to my drowsy eyes all was becoming indistinct: my bare-kneed comrades slept beside me soundly and in close ranks; officers and men lay side by side, for, like friendship and misfortune, campaigning levels many petty distinctions. The lingering light of the fire fell upon their piled muskets with one last gleam, and then expired.

The almost palpable darkness of the forest banished my drowsiness, and I began to reflect on the strange tide of circumstances which had brought me so far from my secluded home, that old tower among the woods and rocks of Cromartie, and from my quiet and gloomy little chamber at the King's College, in the granite city, to the land of these wild scenes and bloody conflicts; and all because—but you will laugh when I say it—an antique silver spoon would not suit my poor little mouth when a child.

I smiled at my father's ridiculous prejudices, and, blessing the poor old man, uttered a fervent wish that in this protracted war I might yet win me a name, which would make him hail with pride the return of the son he had banished. Already I was a captain of musketeers, and I made a mental resolution that the fame of many a great feat should precede my return to my home, or that, like too many perhaps of my gallant comrades, I would lay my bones on the foreign battle-field for ever.

And Ernestine: I thought then of Ernestine—of her goodness and her beauty; of her father's wishes concerning that rough Reitre, Count Kœningheim; I writhed in my plaid at the thought of them, and grasped my dirk on recalling the conversation between Tilly and his ruffian follower.

By separation from Ernestine, the tender impression she had made upon me was increased—for such is the strength of imagination. This fancy or attachment I might doubtless have vanquished by an effort; but I had no reason to exert this effort, and so the fancy lingered in my breast, and strengthened there.

Something startled me.

Raising myself on an elbow, I looked round. Near me a hundred men were sleeping in the darkness; but beyond, at the skirts of the wood, a strange glow appeared between the trees. Some distant town was perhaps in flames; but no, it grew redder, deeper, broader, and then came a crackling sound, with a strong smell of smoke and burning wood. On turning round, the same appearance met my eye on two opposite points; and the lights brightened so fast, that I could see the helmets of the sleepers close beside me shining in the yet distant gleam.

Our sentinels fired their muskets. A pang of horror and dismay shot through my heart.

"Up, up! gentlemen and comrades!" I exclaimed, starting to my feet; "to your arms—to your arms! In three places the wood is on fire!"

At this appalling cry, the whole company sprang to their feet and unpiled their arms.

"The Imperialists are upon us!" cried Lumsdaine.

"The four corners of the wood are on fire," added Hugh Rose, drawing his claymore.

"Iosa—Iosa!" shouted the soldiers; "here come the flames!"

"What matters it, Captain Rollo," said Phadrig Mhor, brandishing his Lochaber axe, and belting his plaid about his giant figure; "the cowards would smoke brave men like rats, but we will break through, and do as Conan did with the devil. If bad they give, they will get no better. Into your ranks, my brave lads—close in, close in!"

"Put your plaids above your bandoliers, or they will explode!" I exclaimed; "hammer-stall your locks and matches—follow me—forward!"

"Quick, Donald M'Vurich!" cried Phadrig, administering a cuff with his gauntlet to a Highlander who lingered to poke his dirk into an abandoned camp-kettle, in the faint hope of fishing out something that might be left; "into your ranks! *Is faidè t-fhacail na t-fhéosag!* By the Holy Iron! your teeth are longer than your beard!"

How shall I describe the scene of horror that immediately ensued!

Around us the whole wood was in flames!

Many of the pines were aged, dry, and decayed, and they stood in a bed of parched moss, thickly strewn with the old leaves and the withered branches of past summers. Running like wildfire along this inflammable stratum, the spreading flame caught the pines by their hollow trunks, and, narrowing on all sides to the centre, its frightful circle rapidly enclosed us. The glare, as the flame shot from pine to pine, from root to root, and branch to branch, though almost shrouded in the suffocating smoke of the green wood, was blinding; and the heat, blaze, and smoke increased—approaching nearer and more near.

My company became bewildered as the fiery circle narrowed round them; they were uncertain whether to advance or retreat—to keep together or to break and scatter. Volumes of smoke and columns of fire surrounded us; every knot and gnarl on the trunks of the trees, every leaf and blade of grass, every check in our tartans, became visible, as the red, livid glow that hemmed us in became closer and closer. From the broad yellow blaze

which sheeted all the background, the solemn pines came forward in black outline—gloomy, tall and towering, like conical spires. My soldiers were appalled; for the same brave hearts that would have stormed a breach or charged a brigade with all the heedless valour of their race, now quailed at the prospect of being roasted alive; and I cursed my own folly in bivouacking so far in the centre of the wood, instead of lying on its skirts; but who could have foreseen such a horrible catastrophe? Was it the result of chance, or the diabolical spirit of Bandolo?

“Dioul!” snorted Phadrig Mhor, half choked, and half blinded; “we wander here like hornless cattle in a strange fold. Oich! we’ll all be birselled in our iron, like partans in their shells!”

Surrounded on all sides by falling and flaming trees, and a terrific glare which brightened and reddened as the forky flames waved in every puff of wind; while the roar of the conflagration, the hiss of the green branches, and the crackling of the knots and fissures as the old fir trunks were torn assunder, increased, till at last we felt the frightful glow upon our faces; and the burning moss, as the spreading fire consuming it almost under our feet, raised a smoke that had already suffocated more than one of my poor comrades.

Driven from their nests in the branches above, and their lairs in the roots and brambles below, the birds and other wild tenants of the wood flitted about us blinded by terror.

Bewildered as we were, another minute had perhaps destroyed us; for the crash of every tapering pine, as it fell prostrate across our devious path, shot a million of sparkles and burning brands in every direction. Suddenly I perceived one dark spot!

There a rivulet trickled through the incass, in a broad and swampy channel, which the flame could not pass, and thus as yet the trees that overhung it were untouched.

“This way, comrades!” I exclaimed; “follow me—quick! Let us pursue the track of the burn: on—on! we have not an instant to lose.”

This saved us; but still we had many perils to encounter, and by the way lost several men, who were suffocated by the smouldering moss, and the smoke it emitted, or were mutilated by the explosion of their bandoliers, or by the falling trees: for every moment, as I have said, some tall pine sheeted with flame came thundering down across our tortuous path, hissing in the little stream, scorching our bare legs, and blinding us still more with sparks and smoke. In a few minutes we were free, though fifteen men were left behind us; and next day we found them roasted in their corslets like tortoises in their shells.

On getting clear of this frightful place, the smoke of which enveloped all the country, and rolled across the waters of the

Sound, we found ourselves upon the highway, where three of our sentinels, who had been posted in front of the wood joined us. The fourth we found lying dead, with a poniard buried in his neck, and his musket gone, together with all the silver buttons which had adorned his doublet. To the poniard was attached a slip of paper. On this one word was written—*Bandolo!*

"And this act of horror has been his!" I exclaimed, looking back to the yet blazing wood; "truly, Count Tilly fights with worthy weapons."

"Tush!" said Lieutenant Lumsdaine, shaking from his plaid and hair the sparks that yet remained there; "I heard Tilly order poor Dunbar's heart to be torn from his gallant breast, and then to be forced between his teeth! He saw this done by the hands of Bandolo, and then he turned deliberately to pray to an old pewter Madonna that adorns the band of his steeple-crowned hat. Ah!—you don't quite know Tilly yet."

And his ruffian had escaped me but a few hours before, though I had determined to have shot him like a wild beast, if there was not time for hanging him. In imagination, I often had him within my grasp as closely as once upon a time he was; and now I had seen him, conversed with him, and been again baffled by his confidence and matchless cunning! When I thought of that, and the sixteen brave men we had lost, I clenched my hands and ground my teeth with grief and anger.

"Gentlemen and soldiers!" I exclaimed, unsheathing my sword; "like true Highlandmen, swear with me to avenge the deed of this night. By wayside or hillside, by field or by forest, in hall or in homestead, swear that, if you cannot give him up to graver justice, you will slay this man Bandolo without mercy, even as the king has commanded; for, had he a thousand lives, his crimes require them all."

The whole company unsheathed their claymores, took one step forward, and, raising their eyes to heaven, with their blades raised aloft, exclaimed in Gaëlic, and with an energy excited by the hot smart of many a scorch and scar—

"By M'Farquhar's soul, and by our fathers' graves, we swear it!"

Then in the Highland fashion, when swearing thus upon the *Holy Iron*, they kissed the bare blades, and, thrusting the points into the turf at their feet, stood for a moment in solemn silence.

"Now, my brave hearts," said I, "fall into your ranks—take off your hammerstalls and prepare for service! Hark, I hear the clink of hoofs!"

"And the drone of the Piob Mhor," added Phadrig, pricking up his ears; "hark you, my captain—if that is not *Beullach na Broige*, call me a Lowland bodaach."

And as he spoke, the morning wind—for it was then about the hour of three—brought towards us distinctly the notes of the bagpipe.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PRISONERS OF THE PISTOLIERS.

THE horsemen came up rapidly. We challenged, and they proved to be the baron's troop of pistoliers retiring from the front with a dozen of prisoners, whom they had taken somewhat by mistake, when falling suddenly among the cantonments of the enemy, having been misled, as their leader informed us, by the statements of a Schönburg cattle-dealer as to the locality of Tilly's outposts.

So dense was the smoke which had rolled from the burned wood across the country, that we could scarcely discern each other, and the baron's inquiries about the conflagration which had so greatly alarmed him were soon satisfied; and now, like a true man of the sword, perceiving that among the prisoners there were two ladies on horseback, I approached to discover whether they were young or old, pretty or plain, and prepared to sympathize with them. Both were clad in dark riding habits, and broad hats with gracefully drooping feathers; and both wore masks of black velvet.

"We have given the enemy's outguards an alerte," said the baron, "and, in revenge for it, some of the restless Croats will assuredly come this way. Allow me to direct that you should halt your musketeers here, until I report unto the Duke of Saxe-Wiemar the utter impracticability of attempting to make any junction with the king's troops by the way of Holstein; besides, I have just learned that he has fallen back on Flensburg, and that the whole duchy is in the possession of Tilly's troops, while those of Wallenstein are daily pouring in from Silesia."

"Then we must again seek flight by our ships."

"Such would be our wisest course; but no doubt Duke Bernard, who is brave as a lion, will endeavour to fall down into Holstein, if the sword can cut a passage for him. He will remember how Mansfeldt's Scots and Germans hewed their passage through the Spaniards at Fleura."

"And your fair prisoners—who are they?"

"Ladies of rank, I believe, or," he added, with one of his impudent winks, "ladies attached to the staff of one of Tilly's generals. By her voice, and her hands, when ungloved, I could swear that the tallest one—she who sits in her saddle so erectly—is the most

beautiful woman in Germany. 'Pon my soul, I am quite enchanted, and shall become ensnared at last, like Mark Antony. As for that little one, with her nose somewhat *retroussé*, she is, also, enchanting."

"Where did you pick them up?" I asked, a little piqued at hearing any woman so praised—but *one*.

"We fell suddenly upon them near a village—shot four of the escort—scattered the rest—dismounted the officer (a dainty cavalier wearing a black velvet hat and white feather), and carried them off, with three other prisoners and ten horsemen, as you may perceive."

"Sir," said one of the ladies in a low voice, urging her horse sidelong towards me; "I beseech you to protect me from insult, if you have not forgotten that old chateau of Luneburg."

"Ernestine!" said I, as my blood rushed back upon my heart.

The Count of Carlstein had obtained the baron's castle and estate; and now the baron had unwittingly made reprisals by seizing the count's two daughters. Here was a catastrophe the end of which it was impossible to foresee.

"Ah, madame!" said I, timidly touching the hand which grasped her riding whip, "I owe you my life, and with that life I will protect you. And this is——"

"My sister Gabrielle!"

"Ah, Herr Kombeek!—I knew it was the Herr Kombeek," cried Gabrielle, almost riding me over, as she pushed her horse towards me; "ah, speak to me—I have not had one good laugh since you left us. How merry we used to be!"

"You are safe among us, ladies," said I, kissing the little hand of the childlike Gabrielle; "for we have no regiments of Croats or Merodeurs under the banner of Christian IV."

"His soldiers have indeed the reputation of being good and gentle, as they are valiant and strong," replied the haughty Ernestine; "but we are now prisoners, and at the mercy of these uncourteous pistoliers——"

"Mention my name to any one who would insult you; and believe me, madame, it will be a sufficient protection in the Danish camp."

"Oh yes!" said Gabrielle, bustling up in her saddle, "I will just say our friend is Herr Kombeek—or M'Combeek, is it?"

"The Highlanders call me M'Combich, because I am the friend of their chief; but my proper name——"

Here the baron uttered an impatient cough.

"Klosterförd," said I; "you will protect these ladies, and see them conveyed to a place of safety."

"Undoubtedly—I have commanded a baggage guard before this."

"In both I have discovered friends——"

"What! is one the señora Prud——"

"Pshaw!" I exclaimed, placing my glove before his mouth; "treat them with every respect; to-morrow we shall have a cartel for their release. They are the daughters of the great Count of Carlstein, camp-master and colonel-general of the Imperial horse."

"Der teufel! the holder of my fief in Luneburg!"

"The same."

"By Jove! my boy, I shall take most particular care of them," replied the baron, twirling his mustaches; "they are *my* prisoners, and the price of ransom lies with me. This is a fortunate stroke of the goddess—that blind jade with the wheel. Ha! ha! Sir Count—thou hast my domain, with its parks and woods; my house, with its library, its wine-cellar, and other appendages—I have thy daughters. Let us see which we value most. 'Pon my soul, as things go, I would rather have the women than the old house."

Knowing the baron to be somewhat of a gay man, and a *roué*, I felt my anger rise at his remarks; while he, probably piqued at the familiar terms on which I stood with his fair captives, said suddenly—

"You will halt here, my friend, until orders are sent to you to withdraw, and fear not for the ladies. I have had the care of all the women of an army before this——"

"Now, Karl, I must protest against this appropriation."

"Der teufel! appropriation—are they not my prisoners? ha! ha! ha! Do you want both, my unconscionable Scot? Wait till to-morrow, and we may share the spoil in fair *camaraderie*, but not till then. Pistoliers—forward—trot!"

The troop moved off towards Heilinghafen; I received a wave of the hand from Ernestine; Gabrielle brandished her whip, and then the whole group disappeared into the smoke which still rested on the face of the peninsula, for we occupied but a narrow headland which jutted out into the Baltic.

Any pleasure which I felt at the prospect of being able again to enjoy the society of Ernestine and her sister, and of having it perhaps in my power to return them the kindness with which they had treated me at Luneburg, was considerably clouded by the knowledge that they were the prisoners of this gay and provoking baron, whose gallantry and intrigues had gained him rather an evil reputation in our camp, and at the quiet court of Copenhagen. Besides, though both of us were captains, he was doubly my senior officer, for the Danish pistoliers ranked next to the king's regiment of guards. I knew not how he might be disposed to treat them; for the appropriation of his Gerr-

property by the count, would naturally make the baron a little vindictive. One reflection consoled me ; while they were Danish prisoners, I knew that Ernestine would be safe from the addresses of Count K  nningheim on the one hand, and the daring stratagems of his worthy rival, Count Tilly's friend, on the other ; but then they might be exposed to the insults of drunken soldiers or hostile bores, to the hardship and danger of that wandering and desultory warfare we were about to maintain among the Danish Isles ; and, if I was shot or taken prisoner, they might be utterly unfriended.

My speculations had just reached this point, and I was about to become pathetic at the double prospect of my own demise and their unprotected condition, when day began to dawn ; a rising wind rolled away the vapour, and, amidst the beautiful green of the landscape, we saw the scathed site of the burned wood, and the blackened trunk of many a pine, standing scorched and branchless among the mass of ashes and charcoal. In some places, a slight puff of smoke arose, to show where the embers yet were smouldering.

On that dark spot lay the bodies of sixteen of our comrades — men who yesterday morning were in the full enjoyment of life and all their faculties ; but we had no time to bury them, so their poor remains were left to the wild animals, the "devouring dogs and hungry vultures," or to the polecats and weasels that lurked among the adjacent marshes.

While the morning was yet grey, the right wing of our regiment under the colonel, Sir Donald, came up with pipes playing ; we joined, and together advanced towards the enemy.

"I have heard of all that has happened overnight, Captain Rollo," said the colonel ; "and this day, before sundown, you shall perhaps have ample room to revenge your danger and loss. Duke Bernard has ordered us to seize the pass of Oldenburg and maintain it against Tilly until he has re-embarked his troops for Flensburg, as we have not the slightest chance of successfully reaching it by the way of Holstein. Our Scottish ships, and three others of the Danish fleet, are now close in shore at H  llinghafen."

"But can we undertake this desperate service with honour to ourselves ?"

"With honour to ourselves we can undertake anything," said Ian, proudly ; "and with honour to ourselves we hope to fulfil whatever we undertake. Look on the blade of my sword, Philip, and see what my ancestor, Gillespoc M'Farquhar, wrote there before he drew it against the Danes at the glorious battle of Luncarty, where *we* fought under King Kenneth III."

Ian held the blade, then brown with age, before my eyes, and

I read upon it the noble sentiment, in the old Gaëlic letter, "*Na tarraig mi gun obhair, 'sna cuir air ais mi gun onair.*"*

"If ever I fall in battle, Philip, this sword is yours, but you must convey it to my father's house in Strathdee; for while they possess this sword, the Clan Farquhar will flourish, at least unto the tenth generation."

The sun rose brightly from the azure Baltic, the flowers put forth their perfume, and with our war-pipes pouring an old Highland march on the breeze—the cool, fresh breeze of the autumn morning that floated over the fields—we advanced, with the fate of Duke Bernard's army in our hands (for we had to cover their retreat or perish), and entered the narrow pass of Oldenburg, four hundred strong; all stout fellows of the best clans in Scotland—resolute hearts as ever met death front to front, by flood or field.

In an hour we reached Oldenburg, a venerable town where Otho the Great founded a bishopric in the eighth century. It once had a noble harbour; but in the wars of Margaret of Denmark, whose chemise was carried on a lance against the armies of the Count of Holstein, the port and town were alike destroyed, since when it has been a poor place, and of little consideration. But it is of great antiquity; for I remember reading in an old MS. history, that on Harold Klack, King of Sleswig in 826, turning Christian, and being defeated in battle by his subjects near Flensburg, he took shelter in Oldenburg, and had himself, with his favourite wife and charger, built up in a stone wine tun, where the lady is heard to sing, the charger to neigh, and the king to wind his war-horn, until this day. We made the MS. up into ball cartridges; thus the reader may be assured, this account of Harold Klack's exit would be found in no other book extant than these memoirs.

We took possession of the pass, and proceeded at once to cut a trench across the road, to throw up a breastwork, and get under cover, on being further reinforced by the baron's pistoliers and a few Danish field culverins of brass, upon travelling carriages.

* It is curious that many old Persian sabres are similarly inscribed,—*Draw me not without cause—sheathe me not without honour.*

Book the Seventh.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE PASS OF OLDENBURG.

HERE again, as at Boitzenburg and elsewhere, the desperate duty of keeping Tilly in check until Duke Bernard's Danish forces were re-embarked, was reserved for the Highlanders of the regiment of Strathnaver. Well did the duke know, that if they failed, no other troops could perform this all but hopeless and most arduous duty. Bent on cutting off the retreat of our able and valiant leader, Tilly was marching all his force against that little peninsula, the neck of which is occupied by the venerable Oldenburg.

In the pass or hollow way through which the high-road wound, we threw up a strong barricade or redoubt of earth and turf, embrasured for six pieces of cannon, with the talus sloped for musketry; a ditch lay in front, and in the angle a small sally-port, by which our troop of pistoliers could pass out and retire again. We had this small troop of horse to assist us if compelled to retire; for it was then becoming customary to post squadrons of cavalry between platoons of infantry—a tactic first adopted by the Swedes after their great defeat in 1614.

We made the place very strong, flanked it out to give a cross fire, and availed ourselves of some ruinous walls, the fragments of an ancient fort—old perhaps as the days of Dan, the supposed founder of the Danish monarchy. The whole day we toiled, and with evening saw our barricade completed, then we rested for a time from our labours, which included the demolition of several houses for materials to construct the work, and the usual appropriation of their furniture for fuel to make ourselves comfortable.

On this evening—the last which many were doomed to see—the sun set gloriously. Sinking behind crimson bars, like an orb of burning gold, it lingered long in the shining west, for the scenery was level, or gently undulated, and interspersed by clumps of pale-green birch and darker beech, and little marshy lakes, where the wild goose and the snow-white swan were floating as yet undisturbed. Towards the pass where we were posted, the sunlight stole along the verdant hollows, tinging with a deep

purple flush the little stream which last night had saved us, and was now gliding on without obstruction, and stealing imperceptibly towards the Baltic. The horizon was all of a violet hue; the spire of Oldenburg seemed a cone of flame, and the ocean a mirror of blue and gold. The corn was waving in yellow ear; the heather moss was in purple flower, just as we might see it in our own dear mountain home; the honey-bee was floating over the wild-flowers that grew by the wayside; while the woodlark and goldfinch sang in the scattered coppice, and the brown sparrow and the robin-redbreast twittered on the green hedges. I remember that Ernestine told me a beautiful old German legend about that honest bird the robin, and how its breast first became reddened by flying against the side of our wounded Saviour, when bleeding upon the cross. It is an ancient and pretty legend, and, like others, will soon be forgotten.

In the warm sunshine, I lay on the grassy sward reflecting on the deadly struggle which was about to ensue, and had inevitably to be encountered before I could have the least chance of again seeing Ernestine.

I might be carried on board, wounded perhaps, to be again under her tender care; or I might perhaps be placed on board another vessel; or, more likely than either, I might be left behind, shot in the pass, to lie there—left unburied by the Imperialists; left, like too many of our brave men, to gorge the maws of the wolf and the raven.

Amid this gloomy reverie, I heard the drums beat and the pipes sound the gathering; all my dark thoughts were forgotten in a moment; I fastened my plaid, drew my sword, and sprang up to lead my company to its duty.

The Imperialists were coming on, and now were less than half a mile distant; the head of the first column was marching straight towards us, as we could distinctly perceive by the cloud of dust which rolled along the roadway, and the brightness of their arms, which, as they were advancing, reflected the sun's rays *steadily* and perpendicularly, for it is necessary to march with arms shouldered when the matches are lighted. If the glitter of arms is varied and uncertain, outposts may always be assured that the enemy are retiring.

Galled by our six pieces of cannon, which every moment ploughed frightful lanes through their deep formation, three heavy columns came on, leaving a long train of killed and wounded behind them. The din of this cannonade brought out the other wing of our regiment from Heilinghafen to support us.

Loud and long blew Torquil Gorm, our piper-major, and his companions; and, as the wild pibroch of Mackay floated over the

level country, we heard the drums of the Imperialists beating in defiance and reply. By the aid of his Galileo glass, Sir Donald, our colonel, discovered that the attacking column was the ferocious regiment of Merodé, with the red cross and black eagle on its colours.

Their cannon slew many of our men; the first struck was my ensign, Hugh Rose, of Kilravock, whose leg was torn off immediately below the kilt, by the ball of a spirole, or serpentine gun, and he was carried to the rear across the Lochaber axes of Phadrig Mhor and Sergeant M'Gillvray; but the brave boy's spirit never quailed, and he frequently cried—

"Stand by the white banner—the *brattach bane*! Stand by the Scottish cross, my brave comrades! I shall march with you on a wooden stump yet."

"Children of the Gaël," cried our colonel in Gaëlic; "keep shoulder to shoulder; here is the white banner of Clan Aoidh—blow your matches—guard your pans—give fire!"

Like a stream of red light, the rapid musketry poured death over the summit of the dark earthen bank, and we saw the Imperialists falling over each other, like fish shaken out of a net; while the thirsty soil literally smoked with their Austrian blood. There was a momentary pause! But the ranks were closed up; the colours were bent forward, and their officers with brandished pikes and rapiers led them on. A lurid streak of fire ran along their ranks; closely and simultaneously it flashed from all the levelled muzzles, and a hail storm of bullets was poured against us, but they generally sank thick and fast into the breastwork, or swept harmlessly over our heads. A few rattled among our helmets, and I heard a heavy clattering on my right and left, as a few of our soldiers fell prone with all their accoutrements on the ground.

On pressed the undaunted foe with tumultuous shouts; with standards waving and hoarse drums beating rapidly, they spread before us like a glittering mass, and our men fired point-blank into it, being sure, as the colonel said, that "every bullet would kill more than its man."

"To your duty! to your duty! my brave hearts of Strathnaver! level low, and level surely!" exclaimed our colonel, waving his sword over the parapet, his scarlet plaid and rich Spanish doublet making him the aim of a hundred muskets. "They break, but they do not recoil; they are again advancing. Well done, men of Lochnaver-side—my father's people! To your duty clan Aoidh, clan Vurich, and clan Chattan!" he added, to compliment and encourage the men of the various tribes who composed the regiment.

On, M'Coll of that Ilk, Munro of Culcraigie, M'Kensie of Inverness, and others, imitated his example; and a wild Highland

cheer responded to the bold chieftain of Mackay, the hero of a hundred feudal conflicts and daring creaghs; while the rattle of brass butts and ramrods, the casting about of muskets, with the incessant and rapid fire volleyed over the breastwork, evinced how arduously our soldiers fought; and every time the smoke cleared away, we saw the brave pikemen of Camargo, and the hardy musketeers of Merodé writhing on the ground, and rolling over each other in their agony. In many places there were others who lay still enough, indeed.

Led by officers of the most heroic courage and devoted zeal,—among whom I recognised the Count of Carlestein, conspicuous by his brilliant armour, red plume, and beautiful horse, brandishing *Ironhorse*—again the first column flung themselves like a living sea against the redoubt, and leaped into the rough trench, officers and musketeers, pikemen and halberdiers, pell-mell, with standards, scaling-ladders, axes, and sledge-hammers.

"Pikes against stormers," cried Sir Donald; "pikemen to the front—shoulder to shoulder, my children! Fire, musketeers!—fire low, and push with your pikes, my gallant pikemen! The bullet misses, but the pike never. To your duty, my brave duine-wassals—my true Scottish cavaliers! Claymore—claymore and biogad!"

Loaded to their muzzles with musket-shot and grape, our cannon swept the ditch, and cleared it of all but the dead and the dying, who lay there in frightful heaps, with their maimed bodies and torn armour drenched in that red current which the thirsty soil imbibed. Again and again they came on, and again and again we repelled them—maintaining the pass against them for two hours with the most desperate valour.

Thrice I saw the count—the brave father of Ernestine—fall, when, struck by successive shots, his horse sank under him; but he seemed to have a charmed life, and thrice his noble horse was again dragged to its feet by the assistance of Count Kœnigheim, his aide-de-camp, whose sword-arm was tied up by a blood-stained scarf. Thus was the contest continued until our men became exhausted by casting about their muskets, and their bandoleers were emptied.

We then fell back and gave place to our left wing under Ian; again the fury of the Imperialists was severely curbed, and again the deadly strife was renewed with them, till the encumbered ditch was almost piled breast-high with dead. For every Highlandman who lay killed or wounded behind the redoubt, at least ten Austrians lay before it; for in showers our cannon-shot tore through their dense ranks, which were eight and twelve deep, an ancient order of battle which Tilly obstinately retained, and which is coeval with the wars of Julius Cæsar.

To me this carnage was nothing then; my blood was fair'

roused, and the poor shattered fragments of humanity that lay in the trench were of little more moment than the fallen leaves of a forest. Yet I could recal the time when I had shuddered at the puncture of a doctor's lancet; but none save an old soldier can know how (for a time) such scenes will harden the human heart.

We formed in rear of the left wing, and almost beyond musket-shot; but our hearts were still on fire, and again we longed to join in that fierce strife before us. The sun had set, but the moon was rising from the Baltic to aid the long lingering twilight of the north, and above the clouds of snow-white smoke which enveloped the sconce, the pass, and the assailing columns, we saw the black ravens floating in mid-air; for these dire birds had learned to know the sound that usually preceded their ghastly banquets.

Our dead and wounded lay around us thickly; and among the former I found my poor young ensign, Hugh Rose. He lay within three feet of a bright brooklet, which gurgled among the long grass and the wild-flowers. Left to bleed to death, the unhappy sufferer had evidently expired in a futile attempt to reach the water, and many others who had crawled so far lay dead within it: thus, crimsoned with their blood, that flower-bordered rivulet soon became a hideous puddle; yet therein our wounded and weary would still continue to slake their thirst, crowding and jostling each other as they drank out of their helmets and hands.

As I viewed this painful scene by the cold glare of the moon, I thought of the old Danish ballad of the great battle at Chalons, where the vassal kings of Attila, the scourge of God, fought against the warriors of Ætius; for it is related that there a similar incident occurred.

Meanwhile, the roar of musketry continued in front, and the brave men of our left wing, under my valiant kinsman the major, kept the foe in check until the night was fairly set in, when Rittmaster Hume of Carrolside, colonel of the Scottish pistoliers, arrived from Duke Bernard with an order for us to retire, as his troops, horses, and cannon were all re-embarked; but this was afterwards proved to be a mistake. Immediately upon this our cannon were spiked to render them useless—a fashion first introduced by Gaspar Vimercalus of Bremen; the redoubt was abandoned; our left wing fell back double quick, and formed with the right into one solid square, with the pikes without, the musketeers and colours within.

We retired as fast as we could, aware that if the Imperial cavalry and artillery got through the barricade at the pass, all would be over with us; as the former would inevitably cut us to

pieces if we formed line, and the other might slaughter us by whole companies if we retreated in square.

With yells of fierce triumph, like a pack of unkenelled blood-hounds, we could perceive the regiments of Merodé and Camargo swarming over the deserted breastwork, where their helmets and weapons flashed and glittered in the moonlight as they formed in some order and pursued us double quick.

At that decisive moment they received a sudden check; for the gallant Baron of Klosterfiörd, taking advantage of their partial formation, advanced against them with his troop, which was principally composed of sturdy Holsteiners.

"Holstein, Holstein!" cried the baron, rising in his stirrups and brandishing his sword.

"Holstein Glaube! Holstein Glaube!" cried the pistoliers, and with plumes of white horsehair waving on their steel helmets, and the blue blades of their rapiers flashing in the moonlight, they swept forward; and their heavy horses—the large, dark, glossy bays of Holstein and Jutland—burst headlong into the Austrian ranks, and rode right through them. There was a tremendous crash—a yell—a horrible confusion, and a flashing of swords; then a discharge of fire-arms was followed by the sound of a trumpet, and the brave pistoliers rejoined us at a hand gallop, leaving only a few of their number behind them. It was, indeed, a brilliant charge!

Captains M'Kenzie of Kildon, the Red M'Alpine, Sir Patrick Mackay, and the laird of Tulloch, with Lieutenant Stuart, and five ensigns, were severely wounded in this affair; so many officers had been killed that we had scarcely enough left to command our pikes; and the colonel's own company, which was almost entirely composed of young duinewassals, or Highland cavaliers of good family, was literally reduced to a skeleton.

Between us and the enemy it was now a race for who should first reach Heilinghafen; but in rapidity of movement they were no match for the bare-kneed men of the Scottish mountains.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE NIGHT OF HORRORS AT HEILINGHAFFEN.

WITHOUT firing another shot, we reached Heilinghafen, and found the town in a state of unparalleled uproar. Terrified by the noise of the cannon and musketry at Oldenburg, and still more by the rapid advance of the enemy, the mariners of the Danish and Scottish ships, and their masters and mates, would

not leave their anchorage to haul in-shore and embark the troops, who were all crowded on the beach and mole—officers and soldiers, horse and foot, women, baggage and pioneers, pikemen and musketeers, without formation or discipline, and struck with a panic by the vicinity of the foe—a panic which our appearance, as we advanced in dense column towards the beach or pier, with arms sloped and matches lighted, increased.

I thought of Ernestine and Gabrielle. Where were they amid all that frightful commotion?

The enemy were close at our heels; there was not a moment to be lost between deciding upon instant embarkation, or a surrender of the whole eight thousand men to Count Tilly. Duke Bernard and his bravest and most distinguished officers, even the Baron Karl and Rittmaster Hume, had lost all authority, for a terror of the victorious Imperialists bore all before it; and there, as if to tantalize us, was our fleet lying in the roadstead, with the loosened sails glimmering in the broad moonlight, which shed a blaze of splendour on the wide blue Baltic.

A mole, or broad pier of stone, which jutted out into the sea, was densely crowded by a column of cavalry, nearly a thousand German Reitres and Danish lancers, who were waiting the approach of two large vessels, the *Scottish Crown* of Leith and a Dane, whose crews, more courageous than others, were fast warping inwards, and had approached within fifty yards of the shore. A shout of rage burst from our ranks, when we found ourselves compelled to halt before this hopelessly disorganised mass.

"Duke of Saxe-Weimar," said our colonel to the general, "after holding the pass of Oldenburg for the whole evening against ten thousand men, are my brave soldiers—the children of my tribe—to fall into the hands of the foe, because these Danish cowards will neither fight nor flee?"

"Taunt me not, Sir Donald Mackay," replied the brave Bernard, lifting the umbriere of his helmet by one hand, and reining in *Raven*, his fiery war-horse, by the other; "for they have sealed their own doom—not I. But they have covered with disgrace the name I have won me on two-and-twenty battle-fields."

"Seven hundred brave hearts yet remain to you," replied the stately chief, who was an old comrade of the duke, "and these will embark your excellency, or perish on the shore."

"By the grey stone of M'Gregor, we will!" added M'Alpine, who led the first company.

"Dioul! it was well said, stout colonel," said Ian; "shall we be the victims of these hen-hearted cowards? Are these figures in iron women or slaves?"

"Let us clear the pier of the horsemen! Let us attack and cut to pieces this band of cowards who bar the way!" cried M'Alpine.

"Let us form square and fire on them," said M'Kenzie of Kildon.

"But they will charge us," added another officer.

"Dioul!" said Ian, "let us *charge* them, and then their blood be on their own heads. Hark—by the Holy Iron! there are the cannoniers of the enemy."

"Pikemen to the front—to the front against horsemen!" cried Sir Donald in a voice of thunder, while high in his stirrups he raised his towering form. "Heed not the wolves behind, but bear away those sheep in front! Shoulder to shoulder, Highlandmen—forward, charge!"

At this terrible moment the yell of our pibroch, and the distant boom of the Imperial cannon, were but additional spurs to us. Formed in line, eight ranks deep, the whole breadth of the mole, our pikemen rushed like a hedge of steel upon the mass of mailed horsemen, whose officers strove, but vainly, to put them in some order to resist an attack so unexpected,

"Draw swords—unsling carbines! blow matches—goad flanks! Denmark! Denmark! Vivat Christian IV!" we heard them exclaiming, and endeavouring by the unsparing use of their swords to enforce obedience, but in vain. The horses in front recoiled madly upon those in rear, and in two minutes the unwieldy crowd was driven over the shelving edge of the open pier, headlong into the water, where they fell in piles over each other surging heavily down, horses and riders, for our charge was so fatally victorious that the old Count of Rantzau alone escaped.

The fiery temperament of the Highland soldier admirably calculates him for the assault and charge; thus, in every battle since the field of Luncarty, a charge of clans has been irresistible. In the onset, the fierce enthusiasm spreads along the line from heart to heart, like wild-fire or lightning; for if the impetuous rush and shock of falling headlong, and weapon in hand, among the ranks of a shrinking foe, will kindle a blaze of chivalry even in the dullest heart, how much must it inspire and inspire a race of hereditary soldiers, like the clans of the Scottish Gaël!

Along the side of the pier, on both hands, the scene was literally awful!

Heilighafen was now in flames; for the Duke, like a wise general, to prevent the foe from finding shelter, had fired the old wooden town in six places, and thus six columns or sheets of fire shed a livid blaze of light upon the harbour, where in a seething mass of foam—the result of their frantic efforts—a thousand armed horses and their mailed riders were drowning or struggling for life. Among the froth and surf, the men clung wildly to each other, and to their horses, sinking in groups, and rising singly to disappear again. The cries of the despairing and the drowning

the splashing of their futile struggles for life, as they swam or sank among a mass of maddened chargers, terrified by the blood-red blaze shed from the burning town upon the water, were piteous in the extreme. The commotion made by them in the surf, actually rolled it in billows on the shore—billows which soon became tinged with blood; for the Imperial cavalry, which now came up with a few light falconets, cruelly opened a fire upon this frightful chaos, and thus the few of the Danish horsemen who might have escaped the waves and a watery grave, perished under the shower of iron poured upon them from the shore.

Our soldiers made a halt, and a half-smothered cry of pity rose from their ranks; for these drowning troopers had been our comrades in more than one encounter.

At that moment a man appeared at the edge of the mole, to which he had scrambled up—Heaven alone knows how—and with a light hatchet he hewed with furious zeal to sever the warps by which the ships were approaching to save us.

"Bandolo, the spy!" I exclaimed, recognising my Schönberg trader in the canvas doublet. "By Heaven, it is Bandolo!"

Gillian M'Bane, Donald M'Vurich, and another soldier, levelled their muskets; all fired at once, and with a yell Bandolo tumbled headlong into the water, to swell the list of the drowning.

"Ah, spy and assassin, thou art gone at last!" thought I.

"Captain Rollo, the enemy's horse are close upon us. Cover our rear with your company until Duke Bernard is on board," said Sir Donald, as he passed me on foot, dragging by the bridle his snorting charger.

Aided by a temporary gangway, our soldiers crowded on board the first ship that reached the mole; and, in token that she was ours, Sir Donald planted the Scottish ensign on her poop.

Though they were fired at by the panic-stricken Danes, who crowded the beach in thousands, two regiments of Austrian horsemen swept along the pier to cut us off; but with my company of musketeers I boldly confronted them. Ian, M'Alpine, Phadrig Mhor, and stout sergeant M'Gillvray were close by my side, and we all fell on with pike and musket, like true Scottish hearts. M'Alister of Lairgie, a poor young ensign, who had lost Kildon's company in the confusion and joined mine, was shot dead; but I snatched from him the *Brattach Bane*, the white banner of Mackay, as he fell into the water, and, throwing myself forward with it in my left hand, and a cocked pistol in my right—

"Gentlemen and comrades!" I exclaimed, "if you would not lose your honour, defend this standard, for thus far shall the enemy come—but no farther." I placed the staff between two stones of the pier, and a fresh conflict began around it. I was

the aim of a hundred pistols ; but, though horsemen seldom or never hit their mark, the bullets tore the standard to pieces.

Conspicuous among the black-mailed Reitres, I recognised the Count of Carlstein in his polished steel, with his scarlet plume, the golden fleece at his breast, and his beautiful charger Bellochio streaming with blood.

"On—on, Kœningheim !" we heard this splendid soldier exclaiming as he brandished his sword—the famous *Ironhewer* (so often mentioned in the *Swedish Intelligencer*.) "Charge with your lances and Reitres ! To the left—to the left ; upon the Danes and down with them, but spare the poor lads in tartan ! Close up—close up ! forward Kœninghiem, for my daughters are on board one of those very vessels !"

How my heart beat at these words, which I heard distinctly amid the hellish uproar around me and below.

On came the Reitres and lancers mingled, their armour dimmed by blood and dew ; on—on, seeming like men and horses of black marble, when seen between us and the red blaze of the town, now sheeted with flame, in their rear. There was a shock, as with levelled weapons and bare knees on the ground, our pikemen met them like a wall ; then sharp swords rang on polished helmets ; bright lances reeking with blood flashed in the air ; as they were thrust, withdrawn, and thrust again ; banners rustled and bullets whistled ; musketry rattled and cannon boomed along the echoing beach ; while the dull roar of the conflagration, and the last cries of the still drowning horsemen, made up a medley of horrors which no mortal pen could ever relate, or pencil portray.

From the poop and forecastle our musketeers, under Kildon and Culeraigie, now opened a fire upon the Austrian horsemen, leveling right over our heads, while our drums were beating for us to retreat on board, that the warp might be cut or cast off.

"On—on, Kœningheim ! On, Halbert Cunningham of the Boortree-haugh !" I heard the count again crying, but in his own mother tongue ; for in the excitement of the moment his German passed away. "Let us spare, if we can, our kindly Scots ; but press on—thou to recover thine affianced wife—I my daughters. To your pistols, my Reitres, and fire on the Danish mariners ; to your pistols !"

All my company were now on board, save myself and a few more. All at once I found myself beneath this brave soldier of fortune, who, in his rage and anxiety to recover his daughters, had forced a passage to the very gunnel of the ship. By one downward blow his sword broke mine ; his next would have been through me ; but I sprang upon him and grasped *Ironhewer* by the blade, which almost cut my gloves and hands to boot. To the very edge of the pier he spurred his plunging horse, and

in striving to shake me from his sword, kicked me repeatedly with his heavy jackboots, which were strongly ribbed with iron; for, in his blind efforts to thrust me into the water, it was evident that he never recognised me.

"Count, count!" I exclaimed, hanging wildly on his sword; but in a moment I was free, for by one blow of his ponderous Highland blade, Ian almost clove asunder the head of his already wounded horse. Then, with its rider, the dying Bellochio fell heavily into the water, while Phadrig Mhor like a giant grasped me by the plaid, and half dragged, half threw me on board of the ship.

"Save him, Ian!" I exclaimed; "let us save *him* at least—he is the father of Ernestine!"

"The father of—who do you say?" asked Ian and Phadrig.

"Ernestine——"

"Who is she?"—but it is too late—too late—he is swept away! If he were Father Adam, or Father Time himself, we could not save him; away with the warp—out sweeps—hurrah!" cried twenty voices.

At that moment a horseman in full armour galloped madly along the mole; burst through the Austrians like a thunderbolt; and dealing a deadly blow at Kœningheim, who tried to intercept him, then urged his horse to a frantic leap, and bounded on board of the ship, which was already in motion and receding from the pier! It was one of the most daring feats of horsemanship ever performed!

"It is the Duke—Bernard of Saxe-Weimar!" cried a hundred voices, all expressive of astonishment.

What a scene did the water around us exhibit! Here and there a drowned or dying horse drifted past, with the rider's spurred boots still in the saddle, though perhaps his whole body was reversed and below water; a few kettle-drums were floating about like anchor-buoys; here and there rose and sank a gauntleted hand or a helmeted head; and, thick as rushes on a mountain lake, the demi-pikes and cavalry standards were floating on the surge.

Swimming near a dead horse, we saw one solitary trooper, who cried to us to save him.

His horse was white, and the drenched plume in his helmet was red. It was the count, and Ian recognised him; this was fortunate, for a severe bruise, obtained I know not how, incapacitated me from rendering the least assistance at that time.

"For your sake, Philip, I will save him," said my gallant cousin; "a brave soldier is ever grateful; but now, while I souce me overboard, make our master-mariner lay his foreyard to the wind."

Ian threw off his helmet and cuirass, tied a cord to his waist, sprang over and swam to the sinking veteran, whom he saved from a miserable death. The count had *Eisenhauer* grasped firmly in his hand; but poor Bellochio had gone to feed the fishes of the Sound.

The moment the count and his rescuer were both on board, we bore away; and, by the dying blaze of Heilinghafen, could perceive the wreck of Duke Bernard's army surrender their horses, their cannon, colours, drums, and themselves to the Imperialists—in all *thirty-six* troops of horse, and *five*, strong regiments of Danish and German Infantry. Rittmaster Hume's Scottish pistoliers, who had preserved their discipline, cut a passage towards Flensburg in triumph; but of the foot, the regiment of Strathnaver had alone escaped!

CHAPTER XL.

WE SAIL FOR THE ISLES OF DENMARK.

By this stroke of misfortune, forty stand of Danish colours, even those of Karl's pistoliers (*gules* with the nettle-leaf of Holstein), became the trophies of Count Tilly; and the fertile provinces of Holstein, with north and south Juteland, were lost by King Christian, whose operations from that day until the great siege of Stralsund, were but a series of flights. The wreck of his own army retired across the Little Belt, while another column of infantry, which had escaped to the northern promontory of Juteland, and passed the Lümfjord into Vendsyssel, were there forced to lay down their arms; and, for a time, the Austrian eagle spread his wings from the banks of the Elbe to the shores of the Skager Rack.

The ship on board of which we—with the general—had so fortunately escaped, was the *Anna Catharina*, so named after the Queen of Denmark, and built by Sinclair, a Scottish ship-builder, who was then master of the Danish dockyards. She was a large ship with two flush decks, a forecastle, and poop adorned with three gigantic lanterns; she had thirty ports for demi-culverins, and elsewhere carried twenty falconets; with these, Ian and some of our cavaliers sent an occasional shot at the shore as the yards were squared, and before a western breeze we bore away from Holstein for the Danish Isles, with our prow turned towards the Little Belt.

Cleaning their arms, stanching wounds, cooking, laughing, and making light of the past danger, our soldiers crowded the fore-

decks; but in the great cabin, full of deep and bitter thoughts, Bernard of Saxe-Weimar sat writing to the king a sad detail of the loss of his troops and territories.

Around him, on couches, on lockers, on gun-carriages, and on the floor, were a number of Highland officers, many of them severely wounded, resting after the toils of the late contests at Oldenburg and Heilinghafen; and on their bronzed faces, their dark tartans, and battered armour, the light of an iron lamp fell fitfully, as it flickered and swung from a beam of the deck above. Near the duke sat the master, a short thickset man, red-bearded and sunburned, wearing a flat fur cap, and an enormous pair of crimson breeches. He had a keg of schnaps under his arm, and from it he was liberally filling the quaighs of those around him.

"Thy name?" said the duke abruptly, laying down his pen.

"Nickelas Valdemar, your excellency," replied the skipper, humbly removing his fur cap, being somewhat startled by the abruptness of the duke's manner.

"Kneel down, sir," said Bernard unsheathing his sword.

"I beseech your excellency to spare me—to pardon me, if—if—" faltered the poor man, tottering down on his knees, and eyeing the bright blade askance with startled eyes; "if—if," he paused again.

"If what, sir—dost think I am going to kill thee?"

"If I was too long of hauling inshore; but I assure your excellency that the wind was right ahead——"

"Nay, my good man, better late than never. Of all my coward fleet, thou and yonder gallant Scot didst alone war against shoreward, and saved me with the help of this brave regiment; for that good deed I dub thee knight—arise, Sir Nickelas Valdemar!"

"Knight Valdemar!" reiterated the honest skipper, drawing up his punchy figure to the full extent of its short height, and taking a complacent view of himself from his red beard to his brass shoe-buckles. "Knight Valdemar! oh, your excellency! what news this will be for my poor old mother, who sells tallow and pitch at Helsingör. I shall now carry my pennant through the Sound at the mainmast-head, like the king himself or any other knight of the Dannebrog—and who shall say me nay? not the admiral of Zeeland himself. Knight Valdemar!—oh, your excellency——"

"Your ship is named——"

"The *Anna Catharina*, your excellency."

"Oh—did you receive on board the prisoners I sent you yesterday morning?"

"Four in number—yes, your excellency."

"The Count of Carlstein would pay his respects to the Duke of

Saxe-Weimar," said Ian, entering unhelmeted, and leading in the brave Imperialist, who had now somewhat recovered from the effect of his dangerous immersion.

"The Count of Carlstein, now colonel-general of the Imperial horse! I knew not that a soldier so renowned in arms was our prisoner," replied the duke, rising; and then they saluted each other with the utmost politeness.

"We meet under different circumstances now than when last we met, Saxe-Weimar," said the count with a smile.

"Yes, at Lütter, just below the castle wall. I was at the head of my German cavalry, and you——"

"At the head of Cronenborg's invincibles."

"We had a tough two hours of it with pistol and spada," said the duke, laughing; "but remember that now, saved as you have been from drowning, Count of Carlstein, you are not to be considered as our prisoner. Go—I free you; retain that sword which you have ever drawn with honour against us, and unransomed rejoin your victorious soldiers on the first opportunity; for us, they are too fatally victorious. To-day I have lost my dukedom, and to-morrow Denmark may lose her crown."

"A thousand thanks, gallant Bernard! This is so like the modern mirror of chivalry we consider you; like that gallant warrior who defended himself amid the flight and carnage at Lütter with the strength and valour of Achilles. But I will not hold my freedom so cheap, and from this hour you must consider my castle and town of Geizar in Bohemia your own. It may repay you; but how can I repay the debt of eternal gratitude I owe unto this gallant Scottish gentleman—my countryman—my friend;" said the count, taking the hands of Ian in his own; "for in a moment of unparalleled peril, at the risk of his own life, he saved mine from amid that mass of drowning Danes and plunging chargers. Ha—I have here another friend!" he added, in our own Scottish tongue, as he turned to me; for, dubious of how he might greet me, I stood a little back from the group, and leaned upon the handsome sword M'Alpine had given me. "By my soul, young sir! you nearly ruined me with Count Tilly, by that escapado at Luneburg. What the deuce were you doing under the auld carle's bed? He vowed by all the saints of Rome that I had a design to assassinate him."

"I entered the chamber of Tilly by mistake," said I; "and my blundering follower, in his fear and confusion, crept under the bed."

"And now, sirs," said the count, as he suddenly changed countenance; "may I ask if you know aught of two ladies who, with their servants, were yesterday taken prisoners by a patrol of Klosterfiörd's pistoliers?"

"They were delivered to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar," replied Sir Donald Mackay."

"Duke, duke! these ladies are my daughters," said the count—with a faltering accent.

"They have been treated as such," replied the duke, "and I rejoice, count, in being able by one graceful act of kindness to draw a veil over the horrors of to-night."

The duke suddenly drew back a double door, revealing another cabin beyond, where we saw two ladies seated together, half-embraced, and near a table lighted by a lamp.

"Ernestine—Gabrielle!" cried the count. He sprang forward, and, with a mingled cry of surprise and joy, his daughters threw their arms around him.

The keen blue eyes of the gallant Bernard glistened, and with much good feeling he softly closed the door upon this tender scene.

CHAPTER XLI.

ON BOARD THE GOOD SHIP ANNA CATHARINA.

As I ascended to the upper deck my heart was full of joy at the thought that Ernestine, whom I had considered all but lost to me for ever, was so suddenly restored; that her father was with us, and that we were now all together sailing quietly on the Danish waters, and far from the rival he had proposed—that Count Kœningheim, whom, though he was a brave and honest fellow, I cordially wished at the bottom of the Red Sea.

The first sentiment that Ernestine had awakened within me returned with renewed force: the sound of her voice—one glimpse of that well-remembered form—had recalled it all, as it were, from the depth of my heart, and I felt that I loved her as she deserved to be loved. But the count, her father!—the thought of him gave me an unpleasant twinge. What would he, a Catholic, an Imperialist, a noble and high military officer under that ambitious Emperor who had bestowed upon him so many princely gifts, think of me loving his daughter; for I was but a poor soldier of fortune—a captain of musketeers, under the unfortunate King of Denmark.

My heart sank at the comparison; but I reflected that the count was brave, generous, and not indisposed to love me: that he, too, had probably left our Scottish hills a poor cavalier, with no other inheritance than his sword: and that my birth and blood were perhaps as good as his own. My heart rose again at these thoughts, and now I looked towards the shore.

The wind had changed. We were lying a westward course, and had run about fifteen Danish miles; the lights of the burning town had disappeared upon our larboard quarter, and we were now off the mouth of the bay of Kiel; the glassy sea and the level shores within it, lay sleeping in the moonlight, in the cold white lustre of which our sails shone like new-fallen snow. Here and there, to mark a promontory or a shoal, a great beacon of coals or other fuel was blazing on the summit of a cairn or an ancient tower, and shedding a long and tremulous line of light upon the heaving water.

As we passed the mouth of the Kielerfiord, we saw afar off the capital of Holstein, with its spires; for the pure blue of the northern sky made all beneath it distinct to us, as at noonday; and what a change of scene was that quiet shore, with its gentle slopes, its thatched farm-houses and green islets, its clumps of waving trees and glassy water, all steeped in the silver splendour of a full autumnal moon, when compared to the carnage and the horrors I had witnessed a few hours before!

The pride of my profession sank in my breast, and a disgust at war almost arose within me. For a moment I wondered not at the old Danish story of Adolphus IV., the conquering Count of Holstein, who, in the thirteenth century, exchanged in old age his armour for the cassock of a mendicant friar, and, surrendering all he possessed to God and the poor, begged his bread from door to door through the streets of yonder town, his capital of Kiel; and I sorrowfully reflected that in another day the victorious legions of Tilly would spread over these fair districts like a desolating flood.

Like a courteous noble and gallant soldier, Duke Bernard resigned the great cabin to the count and his daughters; and he supped with us that night on salted Hamburgh beef and Rostock beer. We drank deep bickers to the health of Christian IV.; to our countrywoman the fair Queen of Bohemia; and to the confusion of those Imperialists, against whom the little power of Denmark was struggling so fruitlessly; and the lights of Skovbye were shining on the waters of the Lesser Belt before we rolled ourselves in our plaids, and lay down to sleep on the hard planks of the lower deck; for there—as in the field—the officer could be no better than the private musketeer.

Next morning the wind blew freshly from the shore; the water was rough, and the *Anna Catharina* lurched heavily.

A message from the count and his daughters invited Ian and me to join them at breakfast in the great cabin; and we put ourselves in the best attire that circumstances would permit. We were still in our fighting doublets. Phadrig Mhor, with a piece of buff belt, polished our corslets and gorgets till they shone like

mirrors; we adjusted our plaids and garters, curled our long love-locks, gave our mustaches a trim, and presented ourselves at the cabin door. I heard my heart beating.

"The brave gentleman who saved me from a frightful death," said the count, presenting Ian to his daughters, who hastened towards him with their eyes full of tears, and their young hearts brimming with gratitude.

Ernestine, at all times self-possessed, presented her pretty hand with the air of a princess; but the more impulsive or less guarded Gabrielle clasped Ian's hands in her own, and kissed them before he could prevent her.

"'Tis well that a certain Moina is not here," thought I; "for the young lady might have good reason to be jealous."

"And here is that other brave soldier who was the means of nearly drowning me," continued the laughing count; our old friend, Herr Kombeek, as Gabrielle calls him."

"I am lost," thought I. "They will never forgive me for that, count," I said; "on my honour I did all that man could do to avoid you. I grasped your sword at the risk of having my hands cut off, and cried aloud to you. I knew not that you recognised me," I added, at the recollection of how he had striven to throw me into the water.

"Nor did I, my brave friend, until the moment when my poor horse Bellochio was cloven through the head by your major's broadsword, and then I fell over the pier. My dear fellow, I do but jest. We met there, not like friends as we do now, but as enemies in our harness—enemies under banner and baton; and what would it have mattered then if you had shot me, instead of wounding Merodé's captain-lieutenant, for I saw your pistol bring him down?"

"Shot you—*you*, count!" I reiterated with a shudder, as I glanced at Ernestine. "Oh! I should never have forgiven myself for so unfortunate an act—not even until my dying hour."

"Tush—heed it not, captain; let us to breakfast, and dismiss all memory of the last night's *camisado*, with its contingent horrors. Let us converse about poor old Scotland, and tell me whether our unwise king and valiant kirk are likely to be embroiled."

On such a topic, I alone could afford any information. Ian, as a Highland gentleman, disliking, or perhaps disdaining, the Lowlanders, neither cared for nor knew of anything that passed beyond the Highland frontier;—the fishing and hunting expeditions of his clan, and the endless feuds and intrigues of his neighbours, the Grants and Frasers, their creaghs, battles, and lawsuits, had sufficiently occupied his attention to prevent him

entering into politics; though to please our kinsman, M'Coll of that Ilk, he had once marched five hundred claymores as far as the Garioch to fight the Gordons of Huntly.

Eminently handsome and noble in aspect and bearing, he was the *beau ideal* of a Scottish chief; and, had his heart not been left in his own beloved glen, I might have found him a formidable though unintentional rival; for the fair sisters chatted with him without cessation, and as their conversation was maintained in a strange compound of German and Spanish, mingled with our own language, the medley and its mistakes excited frequent and immoderate bursts of merriment.

The breakfast passed, and my breast expanded with delight, for I found myself firmly established as the friend of the count and his two charming daughters, and every hour we were on board increased this intimacy; for in a ship there are innumerable little attentions which gentlemen may, and must, bestow upon a lady, thus affording a thousand opportunities for kind and graceful services, which cannot be offered upon the land. On board of ship, ladies are naturally restless; thus, if Ernestine wished to enjoy the fresh air on deck, my arm was immediately proffered, and we clambered to the weather quarter. There she got her dress wetted, and her pretty mouth filled by the salt spray.

Then we slid to leeward, where the water came in through the gun-ports and scupper-holes, causing her infinite alarm.

Then she wished to be below again, and we descended once more to the cabin; but no sooner was my fair charge safely deposited on the sofa, than the rolling of the vessel, the creaking of the timbers, the scraping of the gun-slides, and the noise on deck, made her sick, and she longed to reach the poop again. At last, as the strait narrowed, the wind blew right ahead, and the high-pooped vessel laboured heavily, shipping many a tremendous wave; the fair prisoners became too ill to remain on deck; we sat chatting in the cabin, playing chess and ombre at intervals, or watching from the little windows of the stern the sunlight fading on the Isle of Alsen. The rolling of the ship increased; but even then, under all these disadvantageous circumstances, I could not help being struck by the different appearance of the sisters.

Gabrielle, being fair and blue-eyed, appeared pale and languid; the brightness of her expression had faded, and the rosy tinge of her cheek had died.

The dark orbs of Ernestine—those magnificent eyes, which she inherited from her mother, a lady of Spanish Flanders—still presented their wonted fire and brilliance. Gabrielle's gentle spirit sank; she became fearful, docile, and child-like; but when the ship lurched, when the wind freshened, when chairs and tables went

crashing all to leeward, when the loose cannon-shot rolled from side to side, and the weather-guns strained their lashings until the ringbolts almost started from the stanchions, the proud Ernestine—wilful, and perhaps unmanageable at other times—laughed at her sister's terror.

Then the count praised her firmness, calling her his brave girl, and Gabrielle his poor little baby.

Every moment increased the respect and tenderness, the vague sensation of mingled joy and sadness, with which the merit and beauty of Ernestine had first inspired me; and I felt, that if she had not already divined my important secret, I could not conceal it very long. A hundred times I was on the point of recalling to her memory—or rather, seeking to resume—our last conversation, and my farewell to her at Luneburg. I was certain she could not have forgotten it; but now an unconquerable timidity repressed me.

Being young, and but a plain soldier, I was naturally backward. One moment I resolved to let events develop themselves, and the next to declare my passion to the count and to her; but there was a polished dignity—a terrible air of self-possession about them both—that put all my resolutions completely to rout; for the fear of her refusal, the memory of his preference for Count Kœningheim, and his promise to him, damped my rising courage, and I felt that I would rather, a thousand times, have faced a brigade even of Lowland pikes, than ventured on a subject which seemed so distant from *their* thoughts, though it involved my whole future happiness and fate.

"The count might ask," I reflected, "where are your estates?" I could but lay a hand on my sword, and "Here—with this blade I clothe and feed myself." "And your home, Master Philip?"—"Wherever the colours of my regiment happen to be." These soldier-like answers would assuredly do very well for a baggage-wife, but were scarcely suited to the present purpose; and so I cogitated, until I—poor devil!—made myself as miserable as it was possible to be.

Without any determination being come to on my part, four days passed, and the *Anna Catharina* came to anchor close by the wooden pier of Assens, in the isle of Funen. We had lost much time in touching at various ports, inquiring for the residence of the king, of whose exact locality we had some doubts. The whole regiment prepared at once for disembarkation, while Duke Bernard sent an officer (Red Angus M'Alpine) to the king, who was then residing in an old castle near the small town of Assens, with a hastily-prepared despatch, announcing the loss of his division, and his arrival with the wreck or remnant thereof—the Scottish invincibles of Sir Donald Mackay.

His letter (which I afterwards transcribed from the *Svedish Intelligencer*) was in that style of military brevity which so delighted the brave spirits of that sanguinary war.

"To the most excellent Prince, Christian IV., King of Denmark, of the Goths and Vandals; Duke of Sleswig, Holstein, Stormar, and Ditmarsch; Earl of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst; Knight of the Garter, the Dannebrog, and Elephant—these,

"Comrade and Confederate,—Ruined by their own cowardice, the soldiers of my division have surrendered to the Emperor, and taken service under his standard. All are lost save the Scottish regiment of Strathnaver.

"BERNARD OF WEIMAR."

CHAPTER XLII.

THE BITTERSÄAL.

It was autumn now.

The day was dark and stormy; a grey sky spread its cold background beyond the picturesque gables and wooden fronts of the old houses of Assens. The solemn storks had all disappeared to warmer latitudes; rain, and even sleet, poured down into the narrow and muddy streets; a variety of tints were spreading over the woods; the beeches were becoming yellow, but the hardy pine of the north yet wore unchanged its dark and wiry foliage. All betokened gloom and the misfortunes that threatened Denmark, as we landed in the boats of Sir Nickelas Valdemar, and marched into the town with drums beating and colours flying.

It was a dilapidated place, very little of it having survived the warlike operations of old John of Rantzau, who, ninety years before, had routed there the army of Christopher, Duke of Oldenburg, slain Gústaf Troll, archbishop of Upsala, and levelled nearly all Assens to the ground. In the houses that remained, our soldiers were billeted by the burgomaster; while Duke Bernard, with all the officers, the count and his daughters, repaired to the adjacent castle, to be presented to the king and court.

The Scottish musketeers of the Lord Spynie, and the Danish guards, with their kettle-drummer beating on his famous silver drum, received us with all honour at the castle gate; and many a hand was held out from the ranks of Spynie, to grasp ours in warm welcome as we passed them. The brass culverins boomed from a cavalier before the gate, as a salute to our colonel and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar.

"Ah! my old trooper, dost thou smell powder again?" said he, stroking Raven, his curveting horse, which was led by a page, for, in compliment to the ladies, this gallant prince accompanied us on foot.

He gave his arm to the Count of Carlstein; ungloved I led Ernestine by the hand; Ian led Gabrielle; Sir Donald and our brother officers followed in a group behind us; and the whole were marshalled forward to the Rittersaal, or saloon of the knights, where the king awaited us.

Through folding-doors of carved oak, ushers in the royal livery admitted us to this magnificent old hall, at the upper end of which, under a canopy and upon a dais, stood King Christian, with a glittering group of courtiers.

Grotesquely carved in stone, many a column and corbel projected from the wall; from thence sprung the arched roof; between were hangings of leather embossed with gold arabesques, which had assumed a sombre brown by age. The arched fireplace, within whose vast recess a company might have dined, had around it stone benches on three sides, as in our ancient towers at home; in the centre, a pile of pine roots and Memel logs were crackling and blazing in an enormous basket of iron.

Above the king's crimson canopy hung the moth-eaten remnant of the miraculous Dannebrog, the far-famed banner of Denmark, which was said to have been sent by the pope, for Waldemar II. to unfurl against the Pagans of Livonia; but which was taken by the warlike Ditmarsches in the war of 1580, and retaken from them by the valiant Frederick II.

A flood of crimson and yellow light fell from the painted windows on the king and his group, which, from the length of our interview, I had every means of observing. Christian was plainly attired in a military undress of buff, with gold trimmings, and buff gloves edged with gold; over one shoulder was his scarf of silk; over the other was the broad blue riband; under his left arm was a broad beaver hat edged with rich galloon; his neck was encircled by a chain of gold, at which hung the order of the Elephant, bearing on its back a silver tower studded with diamonds, and full of armed men. A black silk patch concealed the loss of his left eye, which had been destroyed by a splinter in one of those naval battles which have rendered his memory so dear to Denmark. Near him stood his queen, Anna Catharina of the House of Brandenburg, a fair and somewhat florid-looking German, and another lady whom he had wedded with the *left hand*, according to the usage of the times—a fairer and more beautiful Dane, whose peculiar position imparted a gentle and retiring expression to her soft features; though that position was deemed so far from equivocal, that he

created her Countess of Fehmarn (the Samos of the north), and one of her daughters was espoused by the grand-master, Corfitz Ulfeld.

The venerable queen-mother was also present; she was a grave and stately old dame, attired in a long fardingale of scarlet taffeta, with a stomacher studded with diamonds, and her grey hair highly frizzled. Near the king were the Counts of Rantzau and Aschefeld; the Barons of Nybourg, Alsen, Føycø, and others (for there are but two titles of nobility in Denmark); all of these were grim-looking riders, clad in armour of a fashion considerably older than I had ever seen worn in Scotland. Rantzau was Lord of Elmeshorne and Bredenburg, that castle which old Dunbar had defended so valiantly. The grand chancellor, the mareschal of the court, and the *Liveknecht*, with several other gentlemen, wore the large medal of the Knights of the Armed Hand, an order of twelve created by Christian ten years before in the castle of Kolding, on his being chosen general of the circle of Lower Saxony.

The ladies remained near the queen, and like the Danish gentlewomen in general, they were graceful, fair-haired, blue-eyed, softly-featured, and exquisitely feminine; but there were neither fire, loftiness, nor dignity about them. They seemed gentle and languishing; and in truth, tall Ian with his giant plume, red M'Alpine with his crape scarf, Sir Donald with his swarthy visage, and all our bare-kneed Scottish officers, occupied much more of their attention than the splendid cavaliers of the court.

"Such an engaging air—what a beautiful dark girl!" I heard King Christian say as Ernestine appeared. He spoke to old Rantzau, his *Liveknecht*, or squire of the body, who as such could never be without his sword, or far from the royal person; "her eyes sparkle like lance-heads—yet they are soft as a summer moon."

"Though war hath left your majesty but one eye, it is a sharp one for beauty," replied his grim old comrade; "but I would prefer her fair sister, with those mild and sweet blue eyes, and the rich Madonna hair."

At these somewhat too-audible remarks, the sisters coloured deeply, and the ladies near Anna Catharina whispered together, and tittered behind their fans.

Though her attire was plain (for Karl's pistoliers had made somewhat free with her baggage at Oldenburg), there was something striking and triumphant in the beauty of Ernestine. On finding herself the object of so many eyes, that gazed with curiosity and scrutiny, she assumed a proud bearing, which I can liken only to that of a stately Arab horse; while poor little Gabrielle quailed, coloured, and drooped her long eyelashes in

the most charming confusion; for, with much that was noble and graceful, she had in her nature more that was timid and infantile.

The gallant Duke Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, wearing in his helmet the glove of his future bride, a German princess of Dourlach, led forward the Count of Carlstein, saying—

"Allow me to present to your majesty one of the bravest of the Imperial officers—the colonel-general of the German cavalry."

"A brave soldier is always welcome here—even though an enemy," replied Christian, with a haughty bow, to which the count replied by another quite as haughty. "Duke, I have received your fatal despatch, and M'Alpine the Scottish captain has told me all—all—and more than I could have wished to hear. And these ladies, count, are your daughters?"

"In my ardour to rescue whom, I this day stand before your majesty a prisoner," replied the count.

"Nay," said Christian; "Duke Bernard, I understand, has but anticipated me. Saved from that mass of drowning cowards at Heilinhafen, you are not a prisoner, but a freeman, and must retain the sword my general returned to you—*Ironhever*, the theme of so many camp songs. But enough of this—lead forward these fair girls. By the Dannebrog! John of Rantzau, they are beautiful as summer flowers!"

On being presented, Ernestine and Gabrielle were about to kneel, when the brave king anticipated them, by kneeling and kissing their hands.

Anna Catharina smiled disdainfully, and threw a furtive glance at the drooping Countess of Fehmarn, her rival of the left-hand. A gleam of pleasure passed over the features of Carlstein, and he said, while his eyes moistened—

"Your majesty does my poor girls infinite honour."

"Nay, count, I stand as a soldier before them; but as a king before *you*. We cannot pay too much homage to beauty. I have said, count, that you are free, and you may, when you please, rejoin the Imperialists."

"I owe your majesty a thousand thanks; but, with these two girls, how can I now, unattended, pursue a journey so long and so difficult—through hostile Juteland?"

"Ah—that is true!" grumbled old Rantzau, rubbing his thick beard; "der teufels braden!"

"Count of Carlstein," said the old queen-dowager, in high Dutch, "alone you may rejoin your comrades, but these poor maidens could never survive the toil and danger of such a journey."

"True—madam—true!" said the count.

"Where you go, father, Ernestine will go, too," said his eldest daughter, with a proud smile, as she clasped her hands upon his arm.

"And I, too," said Gabrielle, clinging to him on the other side.

"I thank you, my brave girls; but I see that now we must indeed part—and I thank your majesties for your sympathy," said the count, with a sad smile. "Would to Heaven that I had listened to the advice of the good empress when at Vienna, and left in her charge, my motherless girls! But we have never been separated; they would accompany me, even beyond the Elbe, for such is the dear wilfulness of one, and such the affection of both. I am a soldier of fortune, royal lady. In these and other wars I have fed myself with my sword. In the camps and cities of strangers, far from my own home, I felt that I had one wherever my daughters were; my whole soul is bound up in these two girls, and through a thousand dangers God has spared me for their sakes—spared me to protect and love them—as I feel assured that he will spare me from a thousand more."

The count paused, and his voice trembled. It was a fine scene. Old John of Rantzau rubbed his beard again; the queen gazed immoved, with a stolid expression on her German face; but she whom the king loved best, the Countess of Fehmarn, was visibly affected, and drew nearer to her these two little girls, who were all but princesses, and, who alone of all that glittering group remained by her side—for she was their mother.

"After the freedom so graciously bestowed by this kindly duke, and ratified by a princely king," said Carlstein, "my honour requires that I should immediately rejoin my troops, who are now without any other leader than the Count of Merodé; but my daughters—my daughters——"

"Count," said the aged queen-mother again, as Carlstein paused, "I am about to retire to my own castle of Nyekiöbing in the isle of Laaland; permit your daughters to go with me, and I will protect them as if they were my own until this hapless war is ended, or until you can again receive them."

"Madam, it is a gracious offer, and worthy of her who is the mother of a gallant monarch—one whom future times shall tell of," replied the count. "Kneeling, madam, I thank you from my soul—nay, Ernestine, look neither sad nor proud," he added in a whisper, "for it must be so;" and from some protest she was about to make, she was awed to silence by her father's firmness and the presence in which she stood.

"My fairest one," said the brave king, "you have heard what her majesty, our august mother, proposes. You are at liberty to go, and your gallant father may accompany you. From Laa-

land he can more easily rejoin his victorious comrades; and, if our poor Denmark is conquered, he may still more easily rejoin *you* at Nyekiöbing."

The king smiled as he said this; but old John of Rantzau, and those fierce Danes who felt their scars of Lütter smart, twirled their red mustaches, and eyed the count with hostility and hatred.

And now, by the invitation of the queen-dowager, Ernestine, her father and sister were led away to another part of the castle. Queen Anna Catharina, the Countess of Fehmarn, with all their ladies, followed, and I felt sadly that Ernestine was about to be secluded from me; but she gave me a kind farewell glance on retiring through the folding-doors of the Rittersaal—a glance that sank deep in my heart, and made it leap with joy.

The moment they were all gone, a cloud descended upon the brow of Christian IV.; he turned towards the duke and us, and, striking together his gauntleted hands, exclaimed bitterly—

"Bernard! Bernard! oh what a disastrous week this has been. I concealed my grief before that proud Imperialist and his daughters—but my heart bleeds for Denmark; and now I see nothing but flight from isle to isle—defeat, disgrace, and death! Oh! after all I have endured for Denmark; the battles I have fought by sea and land, the friends I have lost, the blood I have shed, the treasure I have spent, and the territories I have lost, has it come to this?"

"It seems to be the will of Heaven," replied the duke, gloomily, "that those savage Imperialists should triumph over us, and subvert the Protestant religion of northern Europe. I have lost my dukedom, and am now an outcast; eleven of my brothers have bled in this war, for we are the hereditary and irreconcilable enemies of the House of Hapsburg. Tilly's troops are invincible; but I say unto your majesty, that had your Danes and my Germans behaved as these Scottish troops have done, the old Jesuit had told another story at Vienna."

"I thank you, gentlemen," said the king, bowing to us. "Adversity is the school for soldiers and for kings; but if I suffer, Herr Donald," he added, taking our colonel by the hand, "it is in the cause of your countrywoman, my fair niece, the Queen of Bohemia, who, unfortunately for herself and Protestant Europe, is the wife of a coward—the chief of a race of cowards and gluttons—who can neither fight for her nor his electoral hat. The main column of my army is retreating fast through Juteland, and will be taken; I still have Glückstadt, where Sir David Drummond, with the Laird of Craige's pikemen and two of Nithsdale's regiments keep the foe in check,—but that too may fall. My God! I feel the crown my brave father left me totter

on my brow ; but let me hope that my soul is still too soldierly to mourn departed state or empty greatness. I have now but twenty thousand men ; Tilly with thirty thousand has overspread the duchies, and Wallenstein with a hundred thousand has marched against us from Hungary. Every ally has abandoned me—all on whose aid I relied when I engaged in this unequal war ; and Gustavus of Sweden yet lingers in his capital, I know not why. The God we fight for, gives and takes away—and I bless his name not the less. I have still my sword, Duke Bernard ; and if I cannot win me a name like my brave forefathers, Thierrri the Fortunate, or Gerhard the Warlike, my fleet still remains, and after every inch of Danish ground is drenched in Danish blood and lost, I will commit myself to the ocean, like those Vikings from whom I am descended. Better are the wild waves they loved so well, and the pure air of the wide Baltic, or the stormier Northern Sea, than the Austrian prisons of Ferdinand of Hapsburg !”

“ It is said like a gallant king,” replied the proud chief who led us ; “ the cause of the Scottish princess caused Denmark these disasters, and we, as Scottish soldiers, ought cheerfully to die for your majesty.”

“ Well, gentlemen and comrades, as the proverb has it, Enough for the day is the evil thereof ; between us and Juteland there yet rolls the same sea wherein the Emperor Otto I. flung his lance, as the limits of his invasion against King Harald Blaatand. The Imperialists are yet far distant from our gates ; so let us to dinner, comrades, and drink in German wine and Juteland beer to the hope of better times, and to the memory of those brave men who have fallen so unavailingly at Lütter, at Bredenburg, and the Boitze.”

CHAPTER XLIII.

MARCH FOR THE CASTLE OF NYEKIÖBING.

On the following day it was announced that Sir Donald was to leave us for Scotland, where he meant to recruit for the battalion among his own clan, and others that were friendly to him ; that Ian, as lieutenant-colonel, was to command the regiment, which was to be broken into detachments ; two companies were to remain at Assens, three companies in other parts of Funen, and four, under Ian, were to march for and occupy the Isle of Laaland, which was the dowry of the queen-mother, and was now endangered by the capture of Fehmarn by the Imperialists, who always considered it the key of Denmark.

On the morning parade our colonel informed us of this separation, at which our soldiers grieved sorely, for every man loved and revered him as a father; and the regiment was like a band of brethren, as every regiment should be—a clan, or one great family; one half of its members were kinsmen, being Mackays, and reared in the same strath where the Naver flows. This arrangement touched me deeply too, fearing that I would now be separated from Ernestine; that I might never see her again; and that thus all my hopes would be crushed in the bud. I gazed eagerly after her, as, with the ladies of the court—for the king and queen were present—she passed along our line while arms were presented, the colours lowered, and the pipes played Mackay's salute. After being joined by Duke Bernard, whom the king embraced and kissed in the old German fashion (as I had often seen a couple of bearded cuirassiers do, to the astonishment of our Highlandmen), Christian and the colonel went down the ranks, addressing some words of compliment or congratulation to every officer; for all had done their *dévoir* like gallant men. He paused before me, observing that I was very young, and was posted three paces in front of the line as commanding a company.

"Cavalier," said he—for, like Gustavus Adolphus, *that* was his favourite phrase when not speaking Danish—"your company shall be marched to Laaland, to quarter at Nyekiöbing, and guard our royal mother."

In profound salute I lowered the point of my claymore, and felt my heart dance with joy; for it was to Laaland that Ernestine and her sister were to accompany the old queen-dowager.

"I thank your majesty for this choice," said Sir Donald; "the youth is my own peculiar care, assigned to me by his father, an old knight of Cromartie, who sent him to the German wars, because—" I trembled with anger, lest Sir Donald had caught the story of that rascally spoon; "because he was the only lad of spirit in the family."

"Well, he shall march to Nyekiöbing," said the frank monarch, with a wink of his solitary eye, and a dry and peculiar cough, a sure sign that some deep idea was fermenting in his honest brain. He then whispered something to Sir Donald, gave his steel tassettes a slap, and laughed heartily. A sly smile twinkled in the dark eyes of the Highland chief, and the blood mounted to my temples.

What could this by-play mean?

I trembled lest the proud Ernestine should discover or observe it, for she was quite near us, and I afterwards learned that it had direct reference to herself; for these good souls—though one

was a haughty Highland chief, and the other an ambitious king—in openness of heart, in honesty of purpose, and goodness of intent, were pure soldiers.

"Captain Rollo," said the king with a smile, "it is agreed that you shall guard the castle of Nyekiöbing," and he passed on to Captain M'Kenzie (Kildon), who commanded the next company.

Attended by her ladies, Queen Anna Catharina next went down the line on foot, and suspended with her own white hands, at every officer's neck, a silver medal attached to a blue riband. These had been lately struck at Glückstadt by the king's order, to commemorate his undertaking the defence of the Protestant religion. One side bore a man in armour, grasping a naked sword in one hand, in the other a Bible, and inscribed for *Religion and Liberty*. On the other was a lighted candle, half burned, encircled by the legend,

Christianus IV. Dan. Norv. Vand. Goth. Rex.

To every soldier a rixdollar was given to drink his majesty's health.

That evening a ship—the *Scottish Crown* of Leith—was laying off Assens, about to sail for poor old Schottland (as they name her in that part of the world). The colonel was to sail next day; and all who could write were busy inditing letters to their friends, parents, and lovers at home—all but myself, who had none that cared much to hear from me. That was a sad and bitter reflection. Even the scrivener of the regiment was busy transferring to paper the regards, remembrances, promises, and rise-money of those who could handle their swords better than their pens. Ian wrote a letter to his Moina, and thereafter appended to it remembrances from half the soldiers of my company to their friends in Strathdee, condolences to the parents of the brave who had fallen, with a request that the names of Phadrig Mhor, Diarmid M'Gillvray, and other allant men whom he mentioned, should be inscribed on the irk-doors for three successive Sundays—the greatest ambition and glory of the poor Highland soldier when far from his native len.

Next morning Sir Donald sailed for Scotland, to bring succour to the king, and urge his desperate state upon the government at Edinburgh. We saw his vessel as she bore northwards down the Belt, while the four companies under Ian paraded by sunrise and prepared to march across the Isle of Funen with sealed orders, which he was to open at Rodbye. Attended by the count's daughters and many other ladies on horseback, with pages and riders in the royal livery, the queen-mother rode forth

from the archway of the castle, and we all received her with presented arms.

Ernestine and Gabrielle were gracefully attired in light-blue riding-habits, laced with silver, with hats and feathers suitable to their age; but the old queen wore the dress of Christian III.'s time, and was cased in a long straight stomacher, all fenced about with bars of whalebone, and thick enough to have turned a sword-thrust. On each side her fardingale jutted out, and over all she had an enormous riding-skirt of crimson cloth, with a pair of those voluminous sleeves which Stubbs, the Englishman, condemned in the *Anatomy of Abuses* (written in the days of his queen, Elizabeth). Like her coif and ruff, these were all stiffened, as the quaint Stubbs saith when reprehending the attire of women, "in that liquid matter called starch, wherein the devil hath learned them to wash and dive their ruffs, which, on being dry, will then stand stiff and inflexible about their necks;" and like Master Stubbs, in truth I have known more than one gay cavalier who got his nose scratched by coming too close to those same ruffs, which hedge round a pretty face as swayne's feathers do a square of infantry.

By the queen's bridle rode the Count of Carlsstein; his daughters on their Danish nags came curvetting behind, and waved their whips to us as they passed. Ernestine, all blooming and smiling, was in high spirits, and her drooping black feather shaded her beautiful face. She let a rose drop from her hand. I hurried from my place to restore it; then a sudden thought made me crave permission to retain it.

"No great boon, Herr," said she, "as it is all over dust now, and has lost half its leaves; nevertheless, if its poor remains will be such a source of gratification to you, I make you welcome to them," and whipping up her horse she darted after the group of equestrians, who were now fast leaving us behind.

"Keep at the head of your company, cousin Philip," said Ian, drily, "and do not spoil your tartans by picking old flowers out the dust."

"I would have picked it up under a shower of musketry, Ian," said I.

"Dioul!" he replied, laughing; "'tis more than I would do, even for Moina; there are bounds to love, but none to folly. A shower of musketry! Zounds, I do not think I would leave my ranks under that, to pick up the crown of Scotland if it lay at my feet!"

It was a beautiful autumn morning, and everything around me seemed in unison with the lightness of my own heart. A warm summer had brought on an early harvest, and everywhere the grain had been hastily reaped and gathered by the husbandman;

who trembled at the rapid approach of an irresistible foe. A strong fragrance arose from the fresh morning earth; the sunshine was warm, yet tempered by the cool breeze that came from the azure waters of the Lesser Belt, that stretched away into dim and far obscurity on our right. In our rear lay Assens, with its castle, and on our left the landscape spread out in long and verdant vistas, tinted by dun autumnal hues; its faded green being interspersed by newly-ploughed fields of rich brown land, the furrows of which glistened in the sun, while the water left in them by the recent rains glittered in long and silvery lines.

From these the sun exhaled a hazy vapour, making somewhat obscure the more distant objects, and even those which were nearer at hand. Thus at times we saw in opaque outline the sturdy figure of a well-fed Danish boor, who was turning up the glistening soil with a plough of ancient fashion, drawn by two fat brindled kine, with curving horns and switching tails, around which the clouds of gnats were dancing; and there, between the stilts of his plough, the clod-pated boor would pause, and gaze at us with lack-lustre eyes as we marched past, four hundred strong, with our tartans waving, our arms and appointments glittering in the sun, while the hoarse drums rattled, and the wild war-pipes poured a Highland quick-step to the morning wind; for four hundred bare-kneed clansmen was a sight for a boor of Funen to remember, and describe to his grandchildren in after years to come.

"You are still looking after that blue skirt and black feather," said Ian, just as the queen and her group of attendants disappeared among the vapour far in front; "I pray you, kinsman, keep such vagaries as love out of your head."

"Love is an affair of the heart, Ian, and the head has nothing whatever to do with it."

"The greater is the pity, Philip; but allow me to advise——"

"You consider me a lover, and yet think I will take advice. Whoever heard of a lover that did so?"

"It is too true; but I hope you are not yet come to that. Love and its sentimentality are all nonsense in a true man of the sword."

"Ian!" I exclaimed; "and Moína——"

He coloured, and haughtily shook his eagle's plume.

"Moína is at home, in Glen Mhor na' Albyn. Here, she would interfere with the performance of my duty to my colonel and the king. As it is, she rather aids them; for she is my guiding star in the hour of danger, and the wish that I may return worthy of the daughter of a brave chief, fires me to emulate the heroes of other times. On the long weary march, and in the dull lonely hours of the night; by the guard-fire and the bivouac, or in th-

comfortless cantonment, with my plaid for a mantle, my sword for a pillow. I think of my brown-eyed Highland bride—I think of Moína Rose with sorrow and joy—sorrow that I am so far, far away from her, and joy that she loves me. Moína is a single-hearted and guileless mountain girl; to love her, is very different from the fancies now floating through your giddy brain, kinsman of mine. I am too true a son of the Gaël to regard strangers otherwise than with jealousy; and court ladies at best are slippery as eels. Remember how many dark-eyed maids at home are all looking for husbands, and ought to have the preference before all these foreign trumpery. There is the tall daughter of old Ferintosh, with her lint-white locks and a fair slice of land, with a good strong tower that, with six brass culverins, guards the highway to Milnbuy, and can levy a pretty good toll thereon; and there is little Oína Urquhart, the daughter of old Sir Thomas of Cromartie, whose dowery I know to be five hundred black cattle, which her spouse is to levy (if he can) among the clans in Ross; and Mary M'Alpine (Red Angus's cousin) whose tocher is still better; a castle in the Black Isle, with five hundred good claymores to defend it."

Without interruption I permitted Ian to run on and enumerate all the heiresses in Nairn, Ross, and Cromartie, whose tochers consisted of short-legged cattle and long claymores, whinstones and fair purple heather; but the result was, that he put me into a very bad humour, which did not find vent until we entered Faaborg, after a march of about thirty Danish miles—a cannon-shot more or less.

The evening was closing as we marched in, and the church bells were ringing, as they are always rung about sunset in the Danish villages and towns.

We—the officers—were billeted by the Herredsfoged (or magistrate) on a tavern or hostelry named the Dannebrog, as it bore the Danish banner on its signboard. The roof of this place was (I remember) considerably depressed, as the host informed us, with the utmost good faith and in a whisper, by the passage of King Waldemar, the wild huntsman, whose spectral train had swept over it on St. John's night, last year. He had just concluded his story when Will Lumsdaine, my lieutenant, came to inform me that the ration of beer served out by the Herredsfoged to our company was only fit for swine.

"Have you told him so?" I asked.

"I did."

"And what was his reply?"

"That it was good enough for Scots."

"*Air Muire!*" cried Ian, buckling on his sword; where is this fellow to be met with?"

"At his own house," replied Lumsdaine. "I would have punished him there; but I love not to draw on a man under his own roof-tree."

Now ensued a friendly contest about who should punish the Herredsfoged; Lumsdaine claimed the duty, as the insult had been given to him; I claimed it as his senior, and Ian as mine. We tossed up a dollar, and the lot fell to me. I snatched up my sword, hurried away, and found my man smoking a pipe in his back garden.

"You are the Herredsfoged?" said I, drawing my claymore.

"I am," said he, with the utmost composure, for he was a strong fellow—a miller, and nearly a head taller than me. Requesting him to walk with me into a little plot which was screened by a privet hedge, I sternly commanded him to retract and apologise for his remarks anent the ration beer; but the Herredsfoged was a brave fellow, and swore by all the devils in Denmark he would never retract while there was a drop of blood in his heart.

We then measured our swords, and fell on like a couple of wild Tartars; I received a scar on one of my bare knees, by an ill-parried thrust; and the second by piercing my left arm, disabled me for a time from using my dirk; but at the third pass I ran him through the left side close by the ribs, and flung him prostrate with his weapon-hand below him. Then with my sword at his throat, while he lay grovelling among his own tulips and broken flowerpots, I compelled him to retract, and, repeating after me word for word, acknowledge "that the said beer was only fit for dogs or Danes." I then helped him into the house, and had his wound looked to. We marched next day, and all kept the story of the duel as secret as possible; for such encounters had been expressly forbidden by an edict of Christian IV. in 1618.

At Faaborg we found that the queen and her train had embarked for Laaland, and that nothing remained for us but to follow by the first shipping we could procure. For one night we occupied the little town, which has the waters of the Lesser Belt on one side, and those of deep marshes on the other. It had been burned in former wars by the army of Christian III., and now the greater portion of it consisted of ruins, encircling a shallow and unsheltered port.

About noon on the following day we disembarked on the isle of Longeland, in one of the towns of which we had a quarrel with the people. A merchant of the place having accused two of my company of pilfering a quantity of kirschwasser from his store in the market street, the Herredsfoged instituted a search, and with Sergeant Phadrig Mhor I went round the billets i-

person, but without discovering the wine, though in the quarters of Torquil Gorm, our piper-major, and Donald M'Vurich, a musketeer (our shoemaker), I saw a very suspicious-like liquid in a large tub, with some Highland brogues swimming on the surface thereof, and that liquid, the rogues told us next day, when on the march, was the very wine we were in search of, and that a good draught of it was still at our service ; but as neither Phadrig nor I had any relish for wine flavoured by brogue leather, we declined their offer, with the threat of a good battooning if such tricks were ever discovered again.

Marching across that long and narrow isle, we took shipping in small sloops for Rodbye in Laaland, for whence (to my great disappointment) we found that the active old queen and her train had again departed before us ; and we were a whole week travelling by land and water among these flat and sandy islands, before we drew up under our colours on the beach of Rodbye. There Ian opened his sealed orders, by which the king, fearing that the Imperialists might seize upon those isles, directed him to leave Kildon's company at Rodbye ; those of Angus Roy, M'Alpine, Munro of Culcraigie, and Sir Patrick Mackay, were marched to the town of Mariboe, where they occupied an edifice that in former times had been a spacious convent, the walls of which were bordered by a beautiful lake ; but we continued our route to the pleasant little isle of Falster, to guard the queen-mother in her own castle or jointure-house. There we arrived on Michaelmas-day, about sunset, wearied by our sea and land journey, and the long nights we had spent in open boats, exposed to the cold air of the Baltic.

Her majesty came forth with her train in person, to welcome us to her castle of Nyekiöbing, and ordered a can of German wine to be served to every soldier ; while the officers, *i.e.*, Ian, Lumsdaine, and myself (for we had not yet an ensign,) were invited to sup at the royal table.

Her castle was a strong and stately edifice, overlooking a regular and well-built town on the Guldborg Sound, a narrow passage usually studded with ships, as it is the way from the shores of Zealand to those of Germany. Every foot's-pace of this beautiful island, which teemed with fertility, was under cultivation, or covered with the richest copsewood ; and from the castle windows we saw the stately beeches, brown with autumnal leaves, casting the evening shadows along the calm blue waters of the narrow Sound. The only troops in the place were a few of the vassals or serfs, singularly clad in mail shirts like modern Tartars, or like the effigies on an antique tomb, and armed with the battle-axe, which, like the halbert, was of old the national weapon of the Danish islemen. The good queen-mother had

more of the frankness of an old German baroness about her than the frigid and empty dignity of courtly state. She sat at the head of her own table in the old castle hall; her steward, the Baron Føysø, a knight of the Armed Hand, a short, stout, and irritable old Dane, sat at the foot, and we enjoyed a merry and a sumptuous meal.

To my joy I found myself seated beside Ernestine, her father the count was opposite.

She perceived my arm in a sling, and immediately inquired the cause.

"It is a wound?" said I.

"A wound—where and when did you receive it?" she asked, while I imagined with exultation that there was an ill-concealed expression of alarm depicted in her charming eyes.

"It is a secret!" said I, and knowing how a *rencontre* sets off a cavalier in the estimation of a pretty woman, I now resolved to make the most of mine.

"In what manner is it a secret, Herr?"

"Because, if divulged to King Christian, he would remember the law of 1618, and send me prisoner to Cronenborg."

"You have, then, fought a duel?"

"Hush—it was only a clean thrust with a rapier."

"And what did you fight about?"

"A lady!" I replied, laughing, and observing her narrowly.

"A lady!" she reiterated, unmoved as a rock, to my great disappointment.

"Nay, nay, Ernestine!" said I, "it was about nothing more than a can of beer."

"A reputable reason, certainly—a valuable commodity to peril one's life for!"

"Every other day I peril my life for the price of it, however; but a point of some importance was involved—a national insult." I then related my quarrel at Faaborg, and she declared that my indignation had been justly roused, but very improperly satisfied.

"But you must not speak of it, Ernestine—nor tell Gabrielle."

"Oh, fear not—your secret shall be kept!" said she.

I found that this story raised me higher in her favour, and I had the felicity of being helped by her to several things, while, to save all exertion of my poor wounded arm (of which I was very much inclined on this occasion to make the most), a servant in the red livery of Denmark cut my food for me, after which I could feed myself by one of those German forks with which the table was furnished.

The moment supper was over, we all shook hands and separated. As we parted, I raised my plaid and showed Gabrielle where (ir-

the breast of my doublet) I had preserved the withered rose, which had dropped from her sister's hand on the morning we had marched out of the east gate of Assens. I was too timid to make Ernestine aware that I had preserved this trivial gift; but hoped that Gabrielle would tell her to the letter, who was so gay and childlike. I could say more than I dared to Ernestine, for on her good or bad opinion hung the balance of my fate. My heart was too much interested in the stake to act boldly.

Book the Eighth.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A DISCOVERY.

A WEEK glided away at the quiet old castle of Nyekiöbing.

Every day the old queen rode forth on a fat Danish horse, accompanied by Ernestine and other ladies; every day, at the same hour as yesterday, the guard presented arms at the gate—the officers saluted—the drum rolled—the pipe yelled, and for the remainder of that day all became quiet again. A few ships now—but very few, for war had desolated the cities of the coast—spread their white sails on the waters of the Sound, and listlessly we watched them from the lower ramparts, where moss and grass grew under the wheels of the unused cannon. I saw Ernestine frequently, but always briefly and in presence of her father; so that no opportunity was afforded to me for addressing her as my heart wished, and as vanity and hope told me she, perhaps, expected.

As our commandant, Ian was, more than I, about the queen's little court; I envied his opportunities of enjoying the society of the two charming sisters; and I frequently saw him in the garden with Gabrielle leaning on his arm; for, though grave and somewhat thoughtful, he told me that he loved her prattle, for it reminded him of Moina. When not on duty I rarely saw the venerable widow of Frederick II., and she spoke to me seldom; but on these occasions it was invariably to make some remark on her late son-in-law, the king of Scotland, James VI., or on his gallant retinue—the chancellor, old John of Montrose, and the three hundred Scottish nobles and cavaliers, who accompanied him to Upsala, when he espoused her daughter Anne, and when so merry a winter was spent by the whole Danish court.

From King Christian couriers came frequently, and it was evident that they bore evil tidings, which were industriously concealed from us.

One day the Count of Carlstein met me hurriedly; I observed that he had on his belt with his sword and poniard, as well as a stout corselet, which the Baron Fœyø had given him.

"I am about to leave you, captain," said he.

"Leave us, count—for whence?"

"The king generously gave me liberty, and, while the great game of glory and fortune is being played so well by Wallenstein, by Tilly, and Merodé, can I remain inactive here at Falster? Another column of Christian's army has surrendered to the soldiers of the empire."

"Another!" I reiterated, thunderstruck by the intelligence; "which?"

That which retreated first by the Lümfiörd. Tilly overtook it, and forced every regiment successively to lay down its arms. The old corporal has sworn by our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, that ere Yule-day every inch of Danish earth shall be under the dominion of Ferdinand. Christian has fled with all his court—fled none know where, and Denmark is all but conquered! Kœningheim has sent word that Tilly expects to see me daily."

"Can all this be true, Baron Fœyø?" I asked the steward incredulously, as he joined us at the castle gate.

"About as true as that the Norweigan bears speak very good Danish," he replied, twisting his yellow mustaches and looking spitefully at Carlstein.

"No doubt such tidings are very unpleasant for *you*, Herr Baron," replied the count, with a haughty and somewhat provoking smile; "but I beg again to assure you that all laid down their arms without firing a shot—all save the Scottish battalions of Lord Nithsdale and Sir James Sinclair of Murkle, who obtained leave to march into Sweden, and join the banner of the young and gallant Gustavus Adolphus."

"It is impossible!" said the stout baron passionately, as he stamped about in his calfskin boots; "it is impossible, and I will never believe it!"

"I had it from the best authority," said the count, still smiling; "Bandolo has been here."

"Bandolo!" I exclaimed; "I had quite forgotten that wretch."

"Well, then, he who is to Tilly what Father Joseph is to Richelieu, has been here."

"Bandolo here,—on this island of Falster?" said the baron, turning angrily to me. "Now, by the holy Dannebrog, mein Herr, your kilted sentinels must be no better than moles or blind bats!"

"A single company of soldiers cannot furnish sentinels for the whole island, Herr Baron," I replied, with some asperity; "there are here a hundred little creeks and bays where a boat may land a man unseen, and sail again. But I thought this rascal died at Heilinghafen."

"He bears a charmed life," growled Fœyø.

"The deil is aye gude to his ain, as we say at home," said the

count; "but to me this rogue appears at present a very amiable and estimable character—ha! ha!"

The passionate old baron took this merriment in deep dudgeon, and retired abruptly.

"Tilly, who knows everything," continued the count, "on learning that I was here and at liberty, sent a small skiff across the Belt for me—yonder it is, afar off, floating like a seagull. At night it will be here to take me to the isle of Fehmarn, where my honour and the emperor's service require my instant presence; for Wallenstein is about to take command of the whole army, and the most brilliant conquests are expected. Ere another year is past, the Swedish rocks and Norwegian Alps shall have echoed to the trumpets of the empire. I will gladly avail myself of the good queen's offer to leave my daughters here; for in this cold season they could not cross the Belt in an open boat, exposed to the mist by day and dew by night. However, that they may not be dependent even on a queen, I have given Ernestine five hundred doubloons, and, in case war or disaster should reach this peaceful isle, you will protect them—will you not, sir!"

"Oh! count—to the last drop of my blood will I guard them; and, if I request it, they shall never lack protection while one brave heart survives in the regiment of Strathnaver."

"The mother of Ernestine was of Spanish Flanders; Gabrielle of France—as I have told you, but——"

"We will never forget that they are the daughters of a countryman—of a brave soldier."

"Enough, captain; in the care of Scottish cavaliers they are safe."

"Yes, count—doubt not that if poor Rollo is knocked on the head, that in Ian Dhu, the Lairds of Kildon or M'Coll, they will find steadfast friends."

"Rollo!" said he, with a start and a smile, "your Highlanders call you M'Combich, and I have never heard your officers name you otherwise than Philip; *my name*," he added, taking my hands in his, is also Rollo!"

"Yours, count?"

"Yes, my ancestors were a branch of the Rollos of Duncruib, in Perthshire."

"Astonishing! we all spring from the same stock."

We shook hands, and would have made other inquiries, but there was no time.

"My *nom de guerre* is Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume," said the count, as we walked into the castle.

"A name that all men know of, from the shores of the Baltic to the mountains of Carinthia. We have all been so familiar

with it, that we never thought of inquiring whether you had another."

"My story is a strange and a sad one; some time I may tell it to you; but not just now."

My soul rose to my lips, and I was about to divulge the secret of my heart—to tell him how I loved Ernestine, and would strive by good works and gallant deeds to make myself worthy of her; but he left me hurriedly, and the opportunity passed, like many others which never return again.

Fear of the Danish burghers in the town made us circumspect, and at midnight I saw him embark in a small dogger manned by four or five men, who immediately put to sea, and long before the morning sun shone upon the waters of the Baltic, which widen there between the Danish isles and Pomeranian shore, the little vessel, speeding before an eastern wind, had vanished at the horizon towards the isle of Fehmarn.

He was gone, and I had forgotten—so much had I been occupied with my own thoughts—to narrate to him that conversation between Tilly and Bandolo, which I had overheard in the bed-chamber of the former at Luneburg. Thus, though Carsten was not ignorant of the spy's great ambition, to settle down in private life as a count of Hanover, he had no idea that the expected coronet was to be shared with his own daughter—with Ernestine; for, with all its presumption, the project seemed so mad and ridiculous, that it had never until that night made much impression on my mind.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE ARMS OF EXPECTATION.

On the day after their father's departure, I saw neither Ernestine nor Gabrielle. They were no doubt discomposed by his sudden absence; but they had been so used to see him go and come again, and generally little the worse save a slash or two, that in the evening I expected to meet them in the garden adjoining the royal residence of Nyekiöbing, the spacious donjon tower of which, with its heavy battlements and grated casements, overlooked it. I was not disappointed. From the window of my apartment I saw them walking there, and hurried to meet them.

It was a beautiful autumnal evening; the low flat shore of the island was bordered by a stripe of golden sand, encircled by the glittering waves of a dark blue sea, on which the sunburnt woods of the past summer cast a long and lingering shadow. Behind the yellow beach and its shady woods of brown, the sun like a golden target began to sink, and as it sank, a million of sparkles seemed to shoot from its descending disc; down, slowly

down it went; the wavering rays shot further upward; they played upon the clouds above, and lingered long there after the sun itself had disappeared; then a deeper blue spread over the waters of the Guldborg Sound—those waters among which (as the old queen once told us) Grön Jette—or the Green Giant—shot a beautiful mermaid, whom he had pursued round Falster for seven years and a day; the woods appeared in darker outline against the lurid sky, and their crisped leaves rustled in the rising wind, as the evening deepened.

Gabrielle was looking sadly towards the sea, as if she was pondering on the path their father was pursuing; but Ernestine had seated herself, and was embroidering on the cover of a large Roman missal, a coat of arms with gold and variously coloured thread. Poor Ernestine's ideas of Catholicism were not very well defined, and consisted more in forms than belief; for nearly all that her Spanish mother had taught her in infancy, the mother of Gabrielle—a French or Belgian Protestant—had left no means untried to obliterate; but Ernestine loved to do all that she thought would please her mother who was in heaven; she loved, as she said, to consider herself “the peculiar care of the mother of God;” she read more prayers than usual in the month of May, and decorated her little altar with the lilies of Mary; but her opinions were very vague and undecided. She and Gabrielle said their prayers every night and morning together on their knees, and before a crucifix; yet Gabrielle did not consider herself a Catholic. Ernestine seemed the most devout in the queen's train when in the Lutheran church of Nyekiöbing, yet she would have repelled with scorn the imputation of being a Protestant. They had both been taken frequently to task by Father d'Eydel, but his asceticism and his harangues rather terrified them; and, being almost entirely occupied by military duty and dreams of ambition, the count had permitted them both to please themselves. Ernestine had an intense love for Gabrielle, and her regard for Gabrielle's mother had only been second to that which she bore her own.

There was but one heart—one soul seemed to animate these two winning creatures.

“Herr Kombeek,” said Gabrielle, hastening to me; “you saw our father before he left this, and can tell us his last messages?”

“The most tender love to you, and that you were both to keep light hearts till his return. But you must not call me that name now, Gabrielle. Mine is the same as your father's—the same as yours, as I have just discovered—Philip Rollo.”

“Oh, that is charming!” exclaimed both the girls, looking up, one with her blue eyes, and the other with her black, beaming with pleasure.

"Your father——"

"Our poor father!" said Gabrielle sadly, as the tears rose again to her eyes, and she turned towards the sea.

"He deputed me to be your guardian."

"You!" said Gabrielle, with a sunny smile of wonder in her bright blue eyes.

"You!" added Ernestine, with a flash of astonishment in her dark orbs, which were red with weeping, although she proudly endeavoured to conceal it.

"I—there is nothing so surprising in that, surely, except to myself—that I should have so great an honour, so supreme a happiness."

"A rare guardian—as if we were mere children, who could not look after ourselves!" they said, laughing.

"Besides, there is that dear old queen," added Gabrielle.

"Nay, ladies, if the wild musketeers of Merodé, or Tilly's savage Walloons—if some exasperated Holsteiners or discomfited Danes, paid a visit in the dark to this castle by the sea; or if the boors revolted under some popular ruffian, as they do at times, and assailed the dowager's court, because her son the king will not make peace with an emperor, who has sworn to conquer Denmark as he has conquered Bohemia, you might find there were worse protectors than Philip Rollo and his company of kilted musketeers.

"And your tall kinsman that wears the eagle's-wing," said Gabrielle, with a faint blush.

"I thank *you* for remembering me, though he in his vanity forgot me," said Ian laughing, as he stepped forward and saluted the ladies, while Phadrig Mhor, his tall henchman, remained a few paces behind; "but harkee, Philip, here hath Phadrig Mhor just learned from a fisherman, that the king is concentrating forces in Laaland to attack Fehmarn."

Ernestine gazed at him anxiously.

"He will certainly recall us. Our swords will rust and our tartans become moth-eaten in this mouldy old castle. Dioull was it to guard an old woman that we came to Denmark?"

"Are you not very happy here, Herr Major?" asked Gabrielle, timidly.

"Doubtless he is, madam," said Phadrig, who had picked up a little German in these wars; "but while we stay here, I will continue a sergeant. Dugald Mhor Mhic Alaster, Gillian M'Bane, and Dunachadh Mhor of Kilmalie, will all be mere musketeers; while our Scots lads in Sweden and Germanie are all becoming colonels of foot and rittmasters of horse. Huich!" he added, cutting a Highland caper, at which the girls laughed excessively; "Clanna nan Gaël an' guillan a chiele!"

"Right, Phadrig!" said Ian, with sparkling eyes, as he caught

sergeant's enthusiasm; "here's to our Highlandmen, shoulder to shoulder!" he added, drinking a handful of pure water which bubbled into a stone-basin near him.

"I am weary of this place already—my sorrows be on it!" rumbled Phadrig.

"Discontented rogue!" said I; "thou wilt never be pleased, I fear. Have we not the best of Danish beef, of Rostock beer and German wine, with easy duty and dry quarters to boot?"

"Phadrig is a true Highlander," said Ian, giving his foster-brother a slap on the shoulder; "he snuffs the distant strife like theerne or gled. A true Highlander, M'Farquhar, thy sword is as ready for a foe, as thy purse for a friend. But away to our company, and in case the king summons us, look well to the hammer-stalls and collars of bandoliers; for orders may come to embark in an hour; and, if we unfurl our colours, Count Tilly must keep sure watch at Fehmarn." Phadrig retired, flinging up his bonnet as he went.

"It is to Fehmarn our father has gone," said Gabrielle, in a tremulous voice; "surely—I hope you will not go there."

"We must go where the king commands us; but fear not, my dear, for your father, the count. He bears a charmed life; I could almost vow he was *gefrorn*, as the Germans and Walloons call it—bullet proof. But come—I have brought some bread for you to feed the golden fish in yon old mossy basin," continued Ian, offering his hand to Gabrielle to lead her away; for he knew well that I wished to be alone with her sister, and a few days' residence at Nyekiöbing had made a wonderful change in his sentiments regarding these two girls. I saw the colour mount to the fair brow of Gabrielle, and a smile of pleasure play on her sweet mouth as Ian led her away.

In the garden there was a pond or large basin, built of stone, and sunk in a thick carpet of rich moss and grass, surrounded by Gueldre rose-bushes; water filled it to the brim, and therein a few gold-fish shot to and fro, and now and then a gray frog croaked or swam among the leaves that floated on its surface.

In this garden the great beeches and tall solemn poplars stood in rows, with black branches, old and gnarled. Like the castle itself, the aspect of the garden was dreary and antique, for the hand of Time had passed over every thing; but when I sat beside Ernestine, all seemed to grow beautiful and bright; the scentless roses gave forth perfume; leaves covered the trees: the still stagnant bosom of the pond became limpid and sparkling, while the old castle walls shone redly and joyously, though the last flush of the west was dying upon their broad façade.

As Ian and Gabrielle retired, I drew nearer Ernestine, and for a moment saw the blood suffuse her face and white neck as

she stooped over her needle, and my thoughts were beginning to be very much perplexed, when a fortunate incident gave a sudden—I may say glorious—turn to the conversation.

"What a very remarkable coat of arms!" said I.

"They are my *arms of expectation*," said she, looking up with a waggish smile.

"Your arms of—pardon me—but I do not understand."

"You know that I am half a Spaniard."

"And half a Scot," I added, placing a hand timidly upon her left shoulder.

"Well—it is the fashion in my mother's country to divide their shield per pale, *thus*—placing their paternal arms on the sinister side."

"On my honour, Ernestine, you are quite a little herald!"

"And leaving the dexter *blank* for those of——"

"Who—what?"

"Their future husband—whoever Heaven shall send; and these we call our '*arms of expectation*.'"

Encouraged by her merry laugh, with a beating heart I took up a pencil which lay in her work-case, and traced upon the dexter side my own arms, three cinque foils within a border.

"Whose arms are these?" she asked, looking up with a timid expression in her eyes.

"The Rollos—they are *mine*! Oh, Ernestine!—do not be offended; but you are so proud, that I am positively quite afraid of you. My fathers have carried these emblems on their shields in many a battle—and by the side of Scotland's kings."

"Ah! good heavens!—what do I see? They are the same as ours! *argent*, three cinque foils *or*, is it? My father has them engraved on everything at Vienna, from his banner to his saddle-bags."

"This is very remarkable; we may be related."

"Who can say that we are not?" continued Ernestine, with a charming smile, while every moment her colour deepened. "My father bears an assumed name, and even we scarcely know him by any other than Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume. His is a strange story! He quarrelled with his elder brother, the lord of his family, who concluded that he was born to misfortune because his mouth was not adapted to the capacity of a certain gigantic spoon, or heirloom, which, however, I do not understand; but to ask questions about it is sufficient to kindle his anger. He served in a Scottish ship of war as captain of arquebusses, and fought against the Spaniards and Portuguese. He was wrecked; and, after many and strange vicissitudes, found his way into the Imperial army, and, belying the old tradition of his house, won himself a coronet, and a fame that will die only with the history

of Austria. His own name, written in a character which I do not understand, is traced here on a blank leaf of this old family missal."

I had listened to her as one transfixed by her words, and now, trembling with eagerness, I turned to the leaf of the Latin missal—a thick little volume, printed on vellum by Thomas Davidsons, 'Printer to the King's Majestie of Scotland,') and read a single line in the old Gaelic letter, which will make two when translated:—

"Helen, daughter of Ian Mac Aonghais, to her son Philip, on his tenth birthday, at the Tower of Craighrolla."

"This is the writing of my grandmother, the daughter of John, the son of Angus of Strathdee! She had been reared by her aunt, who was a nun in a Lowland convent, and, after the term of the Reformation, had retired to her father's house, where he dwelt in the strictest seclusion, and, practising every austerity and rule of her order, had reached a wondrous age, and, outliving all her contemporaries, died only a short time before my embarkation for Denmark. The Count of Carlstein is my long-missing uncle, Philip—Oh, Ernestine, I am your cousin!"

I exclaimed all this with one breath; threw an arm around her, and kissed her forehead. A sudden light—a gleam of pleasure and astonishment—flashed in the eyes of Ernestine.

"My cousin!—you—are we cousins? Oh, it is impossible."

"You are my dear cousin. Oh, Ernestine! my sweet little heart, how I shall love you!"

"Good Heaven—how strange! In one day I lose my father and find a kinsman!"

"Now, have I not a right to be your guardian—and Ian, too? And Gabrielle—oh, I must kiss that little fairy! Ian—Ian! Hallo!" I exclaimed, throwing my bonnet into air; "M'Farquhar—come hither—we are all cousins!"

"It is a miracle!" said Ernestine.

"Believe me, dear Ernestine," said I, tenderly; "love works more miracles than all the saints in your Roman calendar."

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE ROSE LEAVES.

His discovery was of great importance to me. It gave me a decided interest in the eyes of Ernestine; it afforded me, also, a decided right to be her guardian; and I felt that, with confidence,

I could now state my hopes to the count—and to herself—for I was her kinsman, and, save Ian and her father, the only one she possessed in Germany or Denmark.

The long explanatory conversations Ian and I had with Ernestine and Gabrielle, afforded us the best opportunity for the most charming intimacy; and I was frequently amused when Ian, with true Celtic enthusiasm and pride, and moreover with very perplexing accuracy, traced for them their pedigree on his fingers; showing how they were descended from Aonghais Dhu, of the clan Ivor, an irritable individual, who was slain in a *cearnach* with the clan Laiwe; leaving, by a daughter of the clan Chai, a son, Alaster Mhor Mhic Aonghais, who, with his six brothers, closed a turbulent life at the battle of Druim-na'-Coub, leaving a son, Duncan Mhic Alaster Mhor, Mhic Aaonghais, by his wife, a daughter of M'Gillichattan Mhor, who had carried a foray once to the Clachnacuddan of Inverness, where he departed this life, in the good old Highland fashion, with a yard of cold iron in his body; and so on would Ian run for twenty generations, the patronymics increasing with each, until, among the barbarous names and guttural sobriquets, the sisters became lost in surprise. Like every Highlander, Ian carried about in his own memory the pedigree of his ancestry up to the times of King Donald VI. and further back, perhaps; and if Ian's memory failed him, the memory—or perhaps invention—of his sergeant and foster brother, never did; and so they would sit and trace back their progenitors until they became lost in the dark ages of Highland antiquity.

Ernestine heard all this mighty muster-roll with quiet astonishment, but Gabrielle with evident pleasure. She liked the society of Ian, in whom she discovered some resemblance to her father, and admired his blunt decisive manner, and that gallant and authoritative air which declared him the Celtic chief of a long descended line of free and roving warriors.

A few evenings after the discovery so fortunately made by means of that blessed old missal, we were seated near the same place, and Ernestine was feeding the golden fish with crumbs from her white hands, while Ian, Gabrielle, and the old Baron Føyø, were promenading on a terrace, where four brass cannons faced the Guldborg Sound. Again the sun was setting; its orb glowing through the softening haze which floated over the wooded lands of the isle, seemed to rest at the horizon; and again its fiery rays played on the glistening leaves of the tall poplars, that overtopped the old garden wall.

I was conversing with Ernestine, and thinking, as I hung over her, that I had never seen a more winning face or graceful countenance of head and neck; there was something antique and Roman

in their beauty which made her seem divine, when viewed through that bright medium by which a lover sees everything that appertains to his mistress. Since the discovery of our relationship, our intimacy had greatly increased, and I had prevailed on her to accept from me a number of those petty trifles which the taste and attention of men have invented to please and flatter women. My means for procuring these at the small Danish town of Nyekiöbing were very limited, and on the day in question I had just invested my last rixdollars* on the purchase of a ring, which, after some hesitation, she accepted.

"It is very beautiful!" said she, smiling, as she placed it on a tiny finger of her dimpled hand; "and I will take it from you—as my cousin."

"Will you not receive it from me, dear Ernestine, as one who would fain be something more?"

"It is charming," she added, wholly occupied with her new ring; "and the manner in which you bestow a gift trebles its value. How I do wish, cousin Philip, that we had discovered our relationship before my father left us for the isle of Fehmarn!"

"I wish we had, dear Ernestine; for much anxiety would then have been spared me. Ere this I would have known—my—my fate, perhaps."

"Philip—fate!"

"Ernestine, listen to me. You do not love the Count of Kœningheim—he whom your father has chosen?"

"Oh, no! poor Kœningheim. Though merry and lively at times, he is subject to the most frightful fits of sorrow and depression, as if some terrible and untellable secret preyed upon his soul. Besides, with all his assumed air of gallantry, he has in reality an aversion to women."

"An aversion?"

"At times unconquerable, when his *dark hour*, as he calls it, is upon him. Would you have thought this?"

"Never; and scarcely would I have believed it from other lips than yours."

"Love Kœningheim!" she continued; "oh, no!—I can love no one but my father and little Gabrielle—and you, for you have been so kind to her and to me."

"Thank you, Ernestine; my heart would have burst if you had omitted me in that small circle. Ah! if you knew—if you only knew——"

"What?" said she, timidly glancing at me.

"How fondly I love you, dear Ernestine! There, now, it is said—my secret is out. Will you pardon it—can you love me in return?"

* A rixdollar was worth about forty shillings Scots.

After many a long and painful pause, which pen and paper cannot show, the secret had burst from me; but Ernestine, who, with all her artlessness, expected some such avowal, made no reply, and continued to pluck the leaves of a Gueldre rose.

"You know not—you never can know—how deep this passion is, how long it has endured, since first we met at Luneburg, Ernestine!"

Leaf by leaf she still plucked on.

"Ernestine, dearest—do you hear me? that I love you. Oh! you know not how fondly—how well!"

The leaves still floated away on the wind.

I felt that the citadel was about to capitulate; that she trembled, for my hands had ventured to touch, and then encircle her waist. My whole heart seemed to vibrate.

"Ernestine—my own Ernestine!"

The last leaf fell to the ground.

She was pale as death, and her very eyelids were trembling; for in her breath love struggled with her provoking pride, but the plump little god soon bore all before him bravely.

I pressed my lips to her cheek, and felt assured that she—this proud and beautiful girl—was indeed mine, and that she loved me.

Between the high and the closely-clipped hedges of the old garden, we heard footsteps, as Ian and Gabrielle returned to us. I had quite forgot them, and so had Ernestine; but now she started away in confusion.

"I am going," said she; "I must go."

"And shall I not see you again to-night?"

"No; but a good-night, dear Philip, and pleasant dreams to you," she added, in the old German fashion.

"Dear Ernestine, good-night, then, and a thousand blessings attend you; for you have taken a load off my heart, and made me indeed most happy!"

We separated, and, anxious to avoid the intruders, and to muse alone for a time, I sprang over the terrace, where the brass culverins peered through the faded honeysuckle, and from thence I descended to the calm, still shore of the Guldberg Sound.

CHAPTER XLVII.

WINTER QUARTERS—THE SECRET OF GABRIELLE.

Time rolled away; we did not, as Ian expected, go to Fehmarn. Winter stole on, and one day of snow was succeeded by another. The queen and court rode out in sledges, or on horses shod with jagged shoes; our soldiers vegetated like the weeds on the ram-

parts. The old queen told us endless stories of James VI. and of her daughter's marriage, and went regularly every Sunday to the church of Nyekiöbing, where worship was celebrated after the Lutheran fashion. There was a fine organ. After service, the preacher was wont to come out of the pulpit and enter the choir, where he muttered a prayer, after the fashion of a low mass, which used to make Lieutenant Lumsdaine, who was a staunch Presbyterian, twirl his mustaches, and own (though he thought the organ infinitely preferable to the bagpipe then used in his parish kirk of Invergellie) that Lutheranism, as practised in Denmark, was another name for Catholicism. After service, the queen usually rode back in state, seated upon a pillion behind the Baron Føeyø.

In the evenings we had a little ball, and danced to the flute and tabor, or, at times, to the great war-pipe of Torquil Gorm, which shook the dust from the rafters of the hall. At times, the old queen told us legends of the Trolde, or of the imps that haunted the ancient church of Nyekiöbing.

Like every old building in the Danish isles, it had a *nis* (or brownie) attached to it. This spirit kept the seats clean and swept the aisles, arranged the cushions and dusted the pulpit. He was seldom seen at these duties, but was known to wear a green dress and conical red hat, which on the feast of St. Michael he regularly exchanged for a broad Spanish beaver, which overshadowed the whole of his squat figure. He was called the *kirkegrim*, and for his use a basin of groute was deposited every night in the vestry, by the wife of the beadle. Once this was omitted, and the spirit, in revenge, turned all her holiday garments into clouted rags. King Waldemar, the wild huntsman, was another source of many a legend, to which all the old queen's listeners gave implicit faith.

"Every night he rides across Laaland at this season," the queen would say, "and sweeps over the Möens-klint."

"I, myself, have heard him approaching," the Baron Føeyø would add in corroboration; "once on St. John's night, when crossing the rocky ridges of the Möens-klint, I heard on the midnight wind a shouting and winding of horns, the barking of dogs, and the rushing sound of a mighty wind, coming up as from the waters of the Grön-sünd."

"And you knew the approach of Waldemar," said the old queen, all attention, as we drew our chairs closer round the glowing hearth—"of the wild huntsman?"

"My heart seemed frozen within me, and when the spirit passed before me, as the book of Job saith, 'the hair of my flesh stood up.' A storm of wind swept over the dark ridges of the Möens-klint, there was a gleam of lightning, and in the passing

flash I saw the coal-black hounds of Waldemar, with long red tongues hanging out of their foam-covered mouths, as they ran snuffing and questing among the grass."

"And what aspect had Waldemar?" asked twenty voices, in whispers.

"The aspect of a gigantic shadow, brandishing a hunting-sword; and his horse was but a shadow, for the stars shone through them both as they swept into the hollow, and I heard the clatter of farm-gates, the crackle of roofs, and the crash of chimneys, as the infernal train sped over Klintholun and vanished in the distance."

Told by the winter fire, while the night wind rumbled hollowly in the vast tunnelled chimney of the old castle hall, some of these wild legends were more impressive than any relation of mine can make them.

My company lay in winter quarters at the fort of Nyekiöbing for four months, during a most severe winter, in which (after having had the extremity of summer heat) we had to endure the extremity of cold. Over our cuirasses we wore doubtlets of fur or sheepskin, and my soldiers of course retained their tartan kilts, to the astonishment of the Danes, who were ignorant of the actual warmth and comfort of the Scottish garb; for one accustomed to it feels less cold in his knees than other men do in their faces. The Guldberg Sound was frozen over; even the Baltic was clothed with ice, which stood, as it seemed, in silent waves, and covered by long-accumulated snow. All the adjacent isles, Möen, Nyord, and Bogöe, were covered with the same white mantle, and we travelled between them on sledges; but the cold was so much more severe than even the most hardy of our men were accustomed to, that I am sure they spent nearly all their pay in potent corn-brandv.

All the courtiers were muffled to their noses in Russian sables; for though in summer they rather loved the French fashions, they were compelled in winter to resume the well-furred and more picturesque costume of the Danish isles.

Unmarked by any event, save the half-pagan festivities at Yule-tide, the four months glided pleasantly and joyously away; for a day never passed without some hours of it being spent in the society of Ernestine; and the more I knew of her, the more did I love her, for in her manner there was so much that was winning and charming. There was a piquant raciness and vivacity in her mode of expression that were very attractive, though her occasional bursts of pride and temper were a little perplexing; but the graces of mind I discovered in Ernestine gave me cause to rejoice in the hour that I first became known to her. When I looked back to that moonlight night by the

northern shore of the Elbe, where first I met the count near the gates of Glückstadt, conducting to him the little spy Prudentia, and where I received from him the gold chain to which so singular an interest attached, as having been the communion cup of Knox and Calvin, it seemed remarkable that now I should be so intimate with his daughters—the received lover of one, the acknowledged relation of both.

One can “make love” more readily, I think, in a foreign language than in ours. Every other tongue, even the Lowland Scottish, the Gaëlic, and the Irish, teem with expressions of tenderness which the English language does not possess. Consequently the phrase, “How much I love you!” could easily be said in German to Ernestine, or in the language of her Spanish mother; it did not sound nearly so tremendous as in plain English.

Gabrielle was the only alloy to our happiness; she pined, became low-spirited, and longed incessantly to return to Vienna or to Luneburg—to see her father—to leave at least Nyekiöbing; and as the winter wore away, and spring drew near, this morbid melancholy increased. We thought the dreary view of the snow-clad isles and frozen sea, the leafless woods and black pine forests, rendered her spirits low and dulled her old vivacity; or that perhaps it was the grim castle, which certes was dreary enough, for it had served many generations of the house of Oldenburg—generations who had passed away like the casual inmates of an hostel, without their names being remembered in the place of their abode. The winter winds sighed through the doors, and waved the heavy tapestries, which depicted the loves of King Waldemar and *Torve Lille*, the little lady of the enchanted ring, while the melancholy cries of the horned owl were heard incessantly from the turrets of the weatherbeaten keep.

“I am not surprised that Gabrielle finds this old castle dull,” said I one day to Ernestine; “but for your presence here, I should have found it dreary enough too.”

I observed that, whenever I spoke of Gabrielle’s melancholy, the cheek of Ernestine reddened, and she changed the subject with an abruptness that evinced there was some secret in it; but what that secret was I could not divine.

Yule-tide passed. On Christmas-eve the queen ordered all the gates and doors to be thrown open, that there might remain nothing to obstruct the stormy career of the wild huntsman, if he came that way—but Waldemar never came.

The months of snow glided on, and the spring of 1628 approached; but in that solitary Danish isle we heard little of the war which the valiant and unfortunate king was fruitlessly maintaining by outfalls, boat excursions, sudden landings on the co-

of Holstein and Juteland, and as sudden embarkations; always with severe loss to the small but brave force of Scottish and French infantry, which yet adhered to his desperate fortunes.

Vegetating at Nyekiöbing, we almost forgot that we were soldiers. Ian was so impatient to be gone, that he frequently vowed he would make an offer of his sword to Gustavus Adolphus, whose army was almost entirely led by Scottish officers, whom peace with England had compelled to court the smiles of fortune in a foreign camp, where many of them had risen to the rank of nobles; such as Spence of that Ilk, who became Count of Orholm; Douglas of Whittinghame, who became Count of Schonengen; while the Laird of Dalserf and many others rose to be barons of Sweden and Finland.

The charming society of Ernestine had somewhat tempered in me, perhaps, that restless craving for glory and adventure which animates a true soldier of fortune. Thus I was perfectly content, and the winter months were passed in quiet happiness; for she had promised to unite her fortunes with mine when the war ceased, and her father's consent was obtained. When the war ceased! That, indeed, would have tried the patience of honest Job, for the great *Thirty Years'* war was only then in its infancy.

The poor old queen-dowager was so kind and good, so affable and motherly, and bore her diminished fortune with such philosophical equanimity of temper, that it was impossible not to love and respect her; but she prosed sometimes, and inflicted upon us interminable stories of Holger, Danske, King Waldemar, and Lille Torve, and repeated the profound sayings of that pedantic blockhead, her son-in-law, the King of Scotland.*

During my residence at Nyekiöbing, I discovered why King Christian, the patron of poetry and the drama, employed so many Scots, Irish, German, and French soldiers of fortune to fight his battles; for, unlike the Holsteiners, the majority of his subjects had really lost much of their ancient bravery, and being somewhat addicted to cheating, were, as usual with the false, full of mistrust of others. In short, they loved not to wage war, while they could get so many gallant Scots and Irishmen to wage it for them; but, oppressed by its consequences, poverty and poor fare were everywhere apparent. The slavish boors fed on roots, rye-bread, and salted fish; the burghers or citizens, on lean flesh, stock-fish, bacon, and bad cheese. When the land is sold, the men, their wives and children who inhabit it, go

* The pen has been drawn through this in the original. In 1694, Lord Molesworth gave an account of Denmark similar to that which follows. It proved so offensive to the Danes, that their king demanded, by his ambassador, the author's head, from King William of Orange.

with the freehold, like the trees and walls thereon. Their songs bore a strong resemblance to the old ballads sung by our Border harpers; and I have no doubt that many of those ancient lays which the Goths brought out of the East, and which Tacitus mentions in his account of the Germans, might be traced among our Scottish hills, where the wandering bards of other times have brought them from Denmark.

I found them great vaunters, too, those Danes. It was their frequent boast that they were the conquerors of England, and this is graven on the tombs of many of their kings. Thus at Roskilde, on the graves of Harold VII., of Sueno III.; and others, they are always designated *Rex Daciæ, Angliæ et Norvegiæ*. Being Scots, we could not quarrel with these assumptions, as they did not concern us; the Baron Foye in particular, when the schnaps or corn-brandy was more potent than usual, was a vehement upholder of the ancient Danish glory, of which Ian was always somewhat sceptical.

"I assure you it is a fact, Herr Rollo," the Baron would say, counting on his fingers; "we have defeated the Swedes in twenty-two pitched battles, and made them swear allegiance to four-and-twenty of our kings. We have overthrown the Norsemen in thirty-two battles. Russia has paid tribute to eight of our monarchs; we have conquered Ireland eight, and England ten times. Canute IV. conquered Livonia, and Helgo won Saxony by his sword; while Courland, Esthonia, and Prussia, have all, at various times, belonged to the Danish crown."

"Thank God, and the stout hearts of our fathers, these conquering Danes never found aught but their graves on Scottish ground!" Ian would retort with a grim look; "and you may see them yet, Herr Baron, on the battle-fields of Crail, Cru-dane, and Luncarty; but I marvel much that the descendants of these enterprising rovers are unable to hold yonder poor peninsula of Juteland against the soldiers of Wallenstein, Tilly, and Merodé."

From our dreamy mode of passing the time, we were roused to our active military labours by the opening spring; and, from leading the quiet life of a very Dutchman, I was soon to become immersed in a succession of the most stirring incidents.

The season was that which at home in Britain we call spring; but in those northern isles of Denmark the snow lay thick upon the land, and with its dreary sheets the white field-ice covered all the Baltic and the Guldberg Sound; for that infallible authority who exists everywhere, the oldest inhabitant, of Nye-kiöbing, could not remember a season so cold or so severe. From my windows, which overlooked the Sound on one side, and the castle garden on the other, the view was inter-desolate and dreary.

The fortress was very old, and my chamber was hun

faded tapestry, representing the martyrdom of Erik Plogpenning, and his ghastly body gashed with fifty-six wounds; my bed was an immense antique four-poster of the most alarming dimensions, old perhaps as the days of Holger Danske, and completely shrouded by curtains of sombre blue velvet. A tall wardrobe and cabinet of walnut wood, a table and two chairs of oak, all curiously and somewhat barbarously carved, made up the furniture; while the stone fireplace was so capacious, that within it I could stand upright with my bonnet on. And so thick were the walls, that even at noonday but a dim light straggled through the strongly-barred and deeply-embayed windows.

A mound—doubtless the barrow in which reposed the bones of some bold Cimbric warrior—lay under the castle wall. Therein, as the Baron Føyno told me, dwelt a vast number of little Trollds, all clad in green dresses, with heavy ungainly persons, long noses, crooked backs, and red caps. He averred having seen them at a festival on St. John's night; when the mound opened, its womb seemed full of light, and there, around a dead man's skeleton, were the little Trollds seen dancing, drinking fairy wine out of limpet shells, and keeping in thrall the wife of Heinrich Vüg (the Royal gateward), whom they had spirited away, and who had not the power to return to her spouse; though he frequently heard her wailing, when, in the calm summer evenings, he sat on the summit of the mound, smoking his long pipe, and reflecting that, all things considered, his bereavement was not so hard that it could not be borne patiently.

One evening in March, when the snow lay deep around the castle, and, except the woods of leafless beech, or here and there a clump of dark green pine, everything was mantled over with it, I sat at one of my windows, which I had opened to see more clearly the prospect of the Sound, where many a ship lay frozen in, with her high poop and snow-mantled yards casting a long shadow on the expanse of ice.

I was buried in reverie; my mind was endeavouring to pierce the clouds that rested on the future; for though the progress of my love affair was indeed most fortunate, the chances of a happy conclusion were, as yet, distant and vague; and, of all things in this world, there is nothing I dislike more than suspense.

The sun was setting, and its cold yellow lustre fell upon a stone terrace immediately below my window; there, in a sheltered place, and well muffled up in dresses of warm red cloth, trimmed with ample furs of Muscovite sable, Ernestine sat with Gabrielle, conversing in low and earnest tones. They had been there for a considerable time, before a sudden exclamation of the first made me aware of their vicinity. I had not the least intention of listening, for I had too keen a sense of honour

do so, though we have known it to be the favourite resort of gamblers and players, to make even their best-bred cavaliers acquainted with what it was never intended they should know; but at a burst of surprise and anguish from Ernestine, and its horror, chained me to the spot, and, think of it what you will, I was compelled to remain and listen.

"Gabrielle! oh, Gabrielle! what is this you tell me? I will save this place at all risks—we must—we shall! Nay, nay! talk not of danger or of difficulty; for we will launch a boat and put forth together, rather than expose you to this humiliating—this miserable infatuation!"

"Oh, spare me, dear sister!" urged the plaintive voice of Gabrielle.

"I do not reproach you, Gabrielle!" said Ernestine, affectionately drawing her sister's drooping head upon her breast, and embracing it with her arm.

"Ernestine, is it a sin to love?"

"Not as your spotless heart loves!" replied the elder sister, kissing her; while a bright smile of affection sparkled in her wild dark eyes.

"It must be—else whence this sense of mingled shame and mortification?"

"We shall leave this ill-omened island, Gabrielle. We must depart for Vienna—I have still money enough; but oh, what a chance to travel alone! Surely, we shall find some safe conductor, at least, to the opposite shore, where the Imperialists have garrisoned every town. At all risks, my poor little dove, I will free you from this danger; so dry your tears, Gabrielle, and weep no more."

But Gabrielle's tears fell faster.

"Oh, Ernestine! I should die of shame if I thought that anyone, save you, had heard this avowal—this humiliating avowal—I knew my terrible secret!"

"That you love a heedless cavalier—ha, ha, Gabrielle!"

"Do not laugh. I would to Heaven, Ernestine, that I had never met this man—that we had remained at Luneburg, as our dear father wished. And his Moina—how he loves her! He often praises her to me, and without perceiving that every word like a death-stab. Happy Moina!"

Moina! I was thunderstruck. The gentle, the pining Gabrielle loved Ian Dhu, whose chivalric heart was faithfully devoted to another. This was the source of that secret sadness which had so much astonished and alarmed us. Innocent and careless, her heart had guarded in its pure recesses this deep secret, which sprang from a gratitude to her father's brave preceptor. Sincerely I pitied Gabrielle, for I knew that her love

was hopeless; and a thousand little expressions of eye, change of voice and manner, which in my pre-occupation with Ernestine had passed unobserved at the time, now flashed upon my memory. Dear Gabrielle! I loved her like a younger sister, and felt alike hostile and indignant at this unknown Moina, who had rendered Ian so invulnerable to her many attractions.

"Ian will go home to his own mountains—those blue mountains he talks so much of; and he will marry—yes, Ernestine," continued Gabrielle, "he will marry this Moina. He cannot love me. Oh! I fear he would rather despise me if he knew how much I loved him."

"Déspise!—you, the Count of Carlstein's daughter!" said her sister, whose eyes kindled.

"He saved our dear father's life," said Gabrielle, with a sad smile; "'twas that which first opened my heart unto him. He will marry that woman—and never have one thought for me, who love him so well; my memory will pass away like the last year's leaves. I hope she is good and beautiful—for he deserves a bride who is both. Yes—yes, dear Ernestine—let us leave this place for I long for another still more solitary, where, unseen, I may give myself up to grief, and die."

"I have met men at Vienna who did not believe that woman could love, my poor little lamb, Gabrielle!"

"Not love? How little they knew us! And who were they?"

"Wallenstein, the Duke of Friedland, was one—the Count Merodé another."

"Merodé—ah, frightful!" said Gabrielle, with a shudder. "What could he know of love?"

"It was once said that he loved you, and that your rejection drove him to those excesses which have made him and his regiment a European proverb."

"He—the wretched libertine—who is said to have three wives shut up at his castle in the Black Forest of Thuringia! He—horror to his own kinsman as to his enemies! How could you speak of him, Ernestine? oh, how unlike *him* whose image, if by fascination, fills up my whole mind! Sister, I admire, not alone his handsome figure or fine military eye; but his bold and manly spirit, his free and gallant bearing. When we return to Vienna, I will go to a convent, sister; I think I have the vocation of which you once used to speak. It has left you, and come to me. My heart swells with pride when I see him, Ernestine. How his tall eagle's-plume overtops all others here! (I am sure I have got the vocation, sister.) He jests and laughs so kindly and I jest in return, to hide the deadly secret that preys upon my spirit; for until she is beloved a woman cannot love. Oh Ernestine—Ernestine! do not think me mad or immodest; but

dear sister, for I assure you I am neither; I am still your little sister—the same Gabrielle. How happy you must have some one who loves you! There are times when jest—he kisses my hand because we are cousins; and, as his man, in his brave heart he loves me like a little sister. But he knows not the swell of passion excited by his voice, his approach, by his touch, and how the kiss he prints in play on my hand sinks into my inmost heart, and makes it tremble with joy. But he passed away to others, and then the darkness, gloom, and desolation again sink over me.”

“is an infatuation!”

“Kiss me, Ernestine—for you have been a mother to me since my mother died. Kiss me, dear sister, for I am indeed very old!”

Ernestine seemed as if the lofty spirit of Ernestine was stung by the avowal of poor Gabrielle, and she wept with her; but her tears were those of pride and mortification.

Ernestine never dreamt that others can discern their passion; and though the disguise may be that usually veils it, so adroitly had Gabrielle concealed her secret thoughts, that none could have suspected them, and honest Ian least of all.

The year rolled on, and the month of March was passing away.

Ernestine could perceive how the secret I had heard was preying on the mind of Gabrielle, and blanching her thin, wan cheek. She lived without hope—without a future to look forward to; when Ian spoke with joy of his return home at the close of the year (now soon expected by a treaty of which a whisper had reached us), I saw that his thoughtless words sunk like iron into the girl’s soul.

Ernestine gradually subsided into a calm but profound state of melancholy, and begged to be removed from Nyekiöbing, that she might enter a German convent; but the sea around us was covered by the frozen waves of the field-ice. Ernestine and I alone see into the depths of her heart; and even Ernestine did not that I had overheard their secret.

For Ian Dhu, I thought he was blind not to perceive, when he approached Gabrielle, how her blue eyes sparkled, how her cheek flushed, and then waxed deadly pale, while her voice faltered when she answered him; but about the middle of the month a courier came from the king requiring his presence at Stockholm, and he left us by the port of Skielbye, where the ice had left an open passage between the floes.

Ernestine was pleased to see him depart; but after that event the wild eyes of Gabrielle became more sad, and her cheek more faded. Deep thoughts preyed like deathly weariness or a terrible sorrow upon her soul. It was the “worm in the b-

Poor Gabrielle!—like a young flower deprived of sunshine and air, was withering away; and I feared the unhappy girl would die—though people never die of love.

But a crisis was at hand.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE DOGGER.

By the end of March a great and unexpected change came over the weather. The wind, which had long blown from the east-north, now came softly and mildly from the west, but still the atmosphere was cold; for though the vast field-ice floated away from the Guldborg Sound, and the dark blue water rolled free between the isles, their shores were covered with a pure white mantle of deep and dazzling snow.

Hearing that an expedition led by Christian IV. was about to be made against the Imperialists, and that a king's ship had been seen off the coast, I rode one day beyond Skielbye towards the mouth of the Sound, to see her, as I looked anxiously for the return of Ian.

On leaving Ernestine, I thought she seemed more sad than usual, and that her voice trembled when I bade her adieu. This might all have been fancy; but I could not expel such fancies from my head, and again and again they recurred to me, as I spurred a stout Holstein troop-horse (which Baron Fœye had lent me) along the frozen beach.

I waited long at a small house near the seashore, watching a little dogger beating with her two sails to seaward against a head-wind, and threading a devious passage between the fragments of ice that flecked the sea with white; and in the evening I had the satisfaction of seeing a large king's ship, with her white sails shining in the setting sun, and her decks evidently crowded by soldiers, standing up the bosom of the narrow Sound.

I remounted my trooper, which I received from a cottager, who was remarkably polite for a Danish boor, and who informed me that he was half a Scot, as his father had come over with Captain Michael Wemyss' Scottish band in the preceding century, to serve in the old Swedish war. But the peasants were frequently very insolent to us, as foreign soldiers; on many occasions our men had been maltreated, and in two instances our officers had been murdered. For these pranks we usually made the people pay dearly, by sending the slain man's nearest kinsmen under a sergeant to the immediate locality, where, if they failed to find

and shoot the perpetrators, they burned the houses, and houghed the cattle by a gash of the skene-dhu, in old Highland fashion.

On this evening I was involved in one of those quarrels, when returning through a village at the entrance of which the bailiff of Laaland had established a toll, for some reason best known to his worship. In consequence of the dilapidated condition of King Christian's exchequer, we had been without pay for three months; thus I was without a coin to satisfy the gateward, who remptorily demanded a Danish fourpenny-piece (twelve of which make a rixdollar), and deliberately barred my progress with a halbert.

In vain did I tell this churlish boor that I was travelling in the king's service (which by-the-by was not quite the case), there sallied out from the adjacent houses variously armed; and it was evident that, unless I chose to share the fate of poor design Ludovick Lamond, who had lately been cut to pieces by the boors at Rodbye, there was no time to be lost. Drawing my claymore, and putting spurs to my horse, I hewed the fellow's halbert in two by one blow, hurled him to the earth, and passed the toll-gate, narrowly escaping the discharge of five or six pislottes which were fired at that moment from behind an evergreen hedge, the leaves of which were scattered about me by the bullets.

Intent on avenging this outrage, I galloped back to the castle of Nyekiöbing; but soon found that fate had prepared other work for me.

By that time the king's ship had just come to anchor abreast of the town; a boat which shot off her side had just reached the landing-place; an officer of Highlanders sprang upon the mole, and I recognised the outspread eagle's pinion of Ian's helmet, even before he approached me.

With two thousand five hundred musketeers and pikemen, the wreck of his army, King Christian required us to repair to Rodbye, whither he had commanded the scattered companies of the regiment to muster under Ian Dhu, our lieutenant-colonel; and as the rash prince was about to make a bold attack upon the entrenchments of some of Wallenstein and Tilly's now united and mighty host, which occupied all the promontory of North and South Juteland, from the banks of the Elbe to the Skagen cape, my company was to embark without an hour's delay on board the *Anna Catharina*, the ship of Sir Nikelas Valdemar, who had already received the companies of Angus Roy M'Alpine, Munro Culcraigie, and Sir Patrick Mackay, from Mariboe, in the centre of Laaland, and all the little detachments of ours which occupied the castles of the isles.

"Alas, for Ernestine!" thought I, when hurrying back to the

castle of Nyekiöbing; "how joyous to me would these tidings once have been!"

I met one of her attendants (Juliane Vüg, the warden's daughter), and desired her to inform Lady Ernestine that I craved a moment's interview, to bid a long farewell.

The girl went to her apartments, and returned to me almost immediately, with an expression of astonishment and consternation impressed on her fair, florid, and otherwise stolid visage, but unable to articulate a syllable, save some trash about "the fate of her mother—and the Trollds."

"Juliane, have you lost your tongue?" said I. "Speak, girl—Ernestine is ill—ill, my God! and I am to sail in an hour!"

Regardless of all etiquette in the excitement of the moment, I rushed up-stairs to her chamber, and knocked. There was no reply. My heart beat violently as I entered; there was no one within, and everything bore marked evidence of confusion, and hurried departure. A wardrobe with its drawers stood open, ransacked and in disorder; a letter, addressed to me, lay upon the table.

My brain became giddy; Prudentia had left me just in the same manner; but I thought not of her then, as I snatched the letter and tore it open.

"Forgive me, dearest Philip," it ran; "forgive me the steps have taken—to leave this island; it is a course I have long contemplated, but lacked the spirit to put in execution, until the day at noon, when a faithful messenger in a small vessel arrived from our father to say that he is dying in Holstein, and cannot depart from this world in peace unless he beholds us once again. You know how he loves Gabrielle and me. Could we remain after a request so touching and so terrible? Beg the good queen to pardon us. Moreover, Gabrielle is ill; and I know that a change of scene alone can cure her. The vessel we sail with is a Dantzic dogger, with two large sails. Should you see her in the Sound, do say one prayer for us; and, until we meet again, farewell, dearest Philip, and believe me your own

"ERNESTINE."

"Nyekiöbing, March 28th."

I remembered the little craft I had seen tacking out of the Sound, and my heart sank as, with a feeling of bitterness and desolation, I descended to the castle-yard, where old Torquill Gorm, our pipe-major, was playing the gathering, strutting to and fro with his helmet on, and the long ribands streaming from his drones.

"Dioul! my kinsman—accoutre! accoutre!" exclaimed Ian.

ushing after me with his cuirass half buckled; "hark to the allant war-pipe! Mars and Bellona require new victims. And what do you think Heinrich Vüg (the warder whose wife was married off by the fairies) has just told me?"

"Oh, Ian, do not talk to me," said I; "my mind is a chaos! I am a fit companion only for madmen. But what did Heinrich tell you?"

"That our old friend Bandolo has been seen in the Sound by 'ynbœe the pilot, on board of a dogger with two large sails—the same we passed near Skeilbye."

"*A dogger with two sails!* Bandolo!—dost thou say so?" exclaimed, in a broken voice. My heart shrunk up at the words of Ian—a mountain seemed to fall upon me. "Ernestine in his power!" I staggered, and supported myself upon my laymore; the light seemed to leave my eyes.

Ernestine, in whom was centred all my hopes of the future—entwined with life itself—my happiness, my glory, and fortune, for she was all to me—and Gabrielle, too!—what might be her fate?

I knew that Bandolo had long fostered the most extravagant ambition—to become the purchaser of a county and coronet in some of those beggared states of Germany where such things were saleable; and Tilly's favour and the imperial gold had made the bravo and scoutmaster rich as a Lombard Jew. I remembered the conversation between the wretch and his patron at Luneburg; and, if their father was really dying, trembled for the fate of the sisters.

I was stunned, benumbed, and had no sense save that a dreadful calamity—I knew not altogether what—had suddenly dissolved every tie between the world and me. Some time elapsed before Ian could understand me—that Ernestine and her sister had but too surely been decoyed away by a stratagem of the accomplished desperado.

All that passed on this evening appeared to me as a dream.

Phadrig Mhor accoutred me; the parade, and inspection of packs and ammunition, the rattle of our drums as we marched under the old castle arch, and filed down to the landing-place; the tears of the kind old queen, who, in her goodness of heart, kept as the brave Highland band embarked on that desperate expedition, from which few—perhaps none—might ever return; the seemed parts of the same misty dream. Then came our reception on board, the warm congratulations of our comrades, stout old Culcraigie, and Red M'Alpine, still wearing his scarf of crape; then the noisy supper in the gun-room, where salted beef, cold Russian tongue, and Holstein bacon, were washed down by many a brown flagon of German wine; then came the

frolics and merriment—for, with the heedlessness of soldiers, my comrades forgot the hardships and dangers of the past year, and cared nothing for those that were to come. They spent that night in joviality as our ship bore away for Rodbye.

I alone was mute, pale, downcast, and inexpressibly miserable.

I was at times in a state of absolute horror. I could not realise my separation from Ernestine; and if, when overcome by thought, sleep closed my eyes, it was but for a moment—my voice came to my ear, and I started and awoke.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE CAPTURE OF BURG.

I DID my duty well, but mechanically; for my mind was always wandering, and occupied by vague surmises, foreign from what passed around me.

Amid severe storms of frost and snow we came to anchor at Rodbye, and were joined by Kildon's company; thus the whole regiment now was under the command of Ian. With us was one battalion of the Lord Spynie's regiment of Scottish Lowlanders; the Baron Klosterfiord's new troop of pistoliers (for Karl had escaped from the Imperialists); the Comte de Montgomerie's regiment of French Protestants, and a few slender companies of Danish pikes and musketeers, making barely in all three thousand men. With these the brave King Christian, regardless that he was but as a mouse attacking a lion, resolved to beat up the quarters of the invader at Fehmarn and elsewhere; and if he could not conquer, at least to harass and slay as many of the Imperialists as possible.

Storms of snow detained us a week; at last there was a fine day, when the air was clear, and the hoar-frost hung on the boughs of the leafless trees, and when the black ravens were seen floating above the snow in the sunbeams. This clear weather accompanied us into Fehmer-sund, a channel of deep water, about one mile broad, which separates the isle of Fehmarn from the coast of Holstein.

Looking upon this little place—the jointure of his wife-of-the-left-hand—as a key to the German empire, Christian had resolved on driving out the Imperialists; and at noon came to anchor at Burg, its capital, where we prepared to disembark under a fire of cannon and musketry from a regiment of Walloon infantry who garrisoned the place.

Though early in April, the day was bitterly cold, for the

season was one of intense severity. The sky and the narrow Sound were both of the purest blue; but the whole island and the opposite coast lay buried under a thick mantle of snow. Here and there along the shore, we could perceive the deep tracks cut to denote the highways leading into the interior; the whole atmosphere glittered, and the breath of the soldiers froze on the cheek-plates of their helmets, or ascended in steamy vapour from the boats, which, with thirty musketeers of our regiment in each, made straight for the shore with drums beating and pipes playing.

I gazed earnestly at the low and level beach of Fehmarn, in the dim hope that Ernestine might have been conveyed there. My whole thoughts were of her, and I am sure Gabrielle was almost forgotten. Love, like grief, makes one very selfish at times. My recollections of that day are dreamy and indistinct. I was desperate, careless of life, and in that frame of mind which would have enabled me to confront a battalion of pikes as readily as I would have encountered a single man. I cared not a fig for what happened, and at the command of Ian Dhu, now our lieutenant-colonel, I gladly sprang into the first boat which, from the *Anna Catharina*, shot off for the shore.

Two men of my company (a M'Farquhar and a Mackay) fell overboard; but the cannon-balls from a flying battery on the shore were ploughing the water about us, and we had not time to pick up the poor fellows. They called loudly for that succour which, in the hurry of that desperate moment, we were totally unable to yield; and, loaded by their iron trappings, accoutrements, and knapsacks, they sank like stones. What are the lives of two men, when those of thousands, perhaps, are hovering on the brink of eternity?

We landed under cover of a fire from our ships, which battered down the snow-clad houses of Burg to dislodge the Walloons. My company of M'Farquhars had the honour of first touching the ground. The kilted clansmen leaped into the half-frozen water—formed in line, and blew their matches as they advanced. Amid a storm of shot and forest of pikes, we fell on the Walloons with clubbed muskets, and after receiving and returning one volley, drove them back.

"Who commands here in Fehmarn?" I asked of one poor fellow, a Walloon ensign, who had been shot through the side, and lay writhing on the ground.

"He made no reply, but spat blood at me in his agony and animosity.

"Speak!" said I, holding my sword at his throat; "is it the Count of Carlstein?"

"No—it is Colonel Walter Butler."

"Then Ernestine is not here," thought I, hurrying after my men, who, on being reinforced by Spynie's Scots and Montgomerie's French, soon drove the Walloons pell-mell into the town, compelling them to leave their cannon behind. They had securely barricaded and loopholed Burg; and, as we knew their commander to be an Irishman, we prepared to encounter a resolute, and for us perhaps a disastrous defence. Landing his entire force, the king invested the place on all sides; and, perceiving that our ships cut off all succour by sea, Colonel Butler sent a drummer to crave a parley, which ended in his entire force marching out with the honours of war, their drums beating and colours flying, amid the yells and execrations of the boora, on whom they had committed innumerable ravages and outrages. From the beach, our boats in a few hours conveyed the whole safely over to the coast of Holstein.

Thus, with a slight loss, King Christian regained the whole island, and after collecting tribute from its capital, and the villages of Petersdorf and Puttgarten, and after tarrying there a few days to refresh, we prepared to re-embark, encouraged by the good success of our new campaign to make another essay upon the mainland of Holstein.

The house of the burgomaster was converted into a temporary hospital, and among the wounded who had been conveyed there I recognised my former acquaintance, the Walloon ensign, and gave him a flask of corn-brandy, apologising at the same time for the fright I had given him. He was now in better humour, and being somewhat disposed for conversation, I asked him if he knew "the Count Tilly's confidant and scoutmaster, Bandolo, the Spanish bravo?"

"I have seen him a thousand times," he replied; "but you know not, cavalier, how we soldiers despise this cowardly truckler, who handles, but only in secret, the knife and the pistol. The day before you attacked us, he sailed into the Fehmer-sund with tidings of your coming, for which he received a hundred good dollars from Colonel Butler; hence our barricades at Burg, and our batteries on the beach."

"His vessel?" said I, turning breathlessly towards the Sound.

"A small dogger, with two sails, had on board only himself and three other men, I believe; but the fellow is bold as Ogier le Dane, or the devil himself."

"Were there any ladies with him?"

"Ladies with Bandolo!" repeated the Walloon, laughing, and then making a grimace as his wound twitched him; "why, cavalier, though the fellow is rich as Cæsus, the most degraded camp-follower would shudder at his touch. Rumour says that

he is steeped to the lips in blood—the blood of assassinated men.”

“And where is he now?” I asked, making a terrible effort to appear calm.

“I know not. As your ships entered the Sound on the east, he sailed out by the west, and is gone, I believe, towards Eekernfiörd, where a body of Tilly's troops are cantoned.”

“Heaven be thanked!” thought I, leaving the poor officer on his bed of blood-stained straw; “it is on Eekernfiörd that we are next to bend our cannon.”

As Fehmarn is a fertile island, we procured an ample store of the butter, cheese, and fresh provisions which the frugal inhabitants had been able to conceal from the Imperial marauders; and in lieu of their hose—now somewhat tattered—our Highlanders obtained some hundred pairs of soft stockings, which had been knitted by the wives and daughters of the boors.

We then re-embarked about the middle of April, minus our preacher or chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Zerubbabel Bang, who had the misfortune to fall in a duel. He and a lieutenant of Karl's pistoliers, having quarrelled about the burgomaster's daughter, a pretty little *jungfrau* with blue eyes and blooming complexion, came to high words, and from thence to hard blows with back-sword and dagger, and our poor minister (an old fellow-student of mine at the King's College in the Brave City) was fairly run through the body and slain.

Being a commissioned officer, and having the rank of major, we buried him under the dismantled batteries with military honours. The right wing of the regiment fired three volleys above the grave, and our drums beat the *Point of War*, while the shovels of the pioneers closed his last abode for ever.

CHAPTER L.

ST. MARK'S DAY.

AGITATED by emotions of no ordinary kind, on the evening of the 26th April I saw the broad harbour of Eekernfiörd open to receive our ships; for in that little town, the painted walls and church spire of which I could see shining afar off in the cold yellow light of a stormy setting sun, Ernestine might be in safety by her father's side, or perhaps with Bandolo.

I cannot describe all that I endured of anger, bitterness, impatience, and anxiety during these weeks of warfare and wandering among the Danish isles and Juteland coasts. Relief con-

only be found by plunging into the fierce tumult and excitement of strife. When that passed away, my agony and suspense returned with redoubled force.

Old superstition has made the 26th of April, St. Mark's day, an unlucky time for an expedition; and I have known more than one worthy crofter and bien bonnet-laird, near my father's tower at home, who dared not plough on St. Mark's day, lest a blight should destroy the fruit of their labour; neither would their wives churn or spin, lest the milk should become soured and the rock ravelled. King Christian knew little of such fancies of the olden time, and cared less for them; thus, after deceiving the enemy by standing off to the seaward, he returned again when the darkness set in, and ordered all to be in readiness for breaking the strong boom which closed the harbour mouth, and for obtaining the town by storm.

By a sudden change in the weather, the snow had almost entirely disappeared, and vegetation had fully commenced; but a cold and stormy wind swept over the darkened waters of the bay, a pitchy gloom enveloped the whole sky, and shrouded in obscurity the low, flat shore of South Jutland. Steadily and noiselessly our vessel stood towards the harbour mouth, a fireship leading the van to burst and destroy the boom, and to force a passage for us. We expected to be all engaged in an hour, and mustered in our arms and in silence on the decks of the three royal ships. We endeavoured in vain to discover the bearing of the shore. It seemed to be visible to King Christian alone; for that able and valiant monarch, being a mariner as well as a warrior, sheathed in his full armour, stood by the tiller, steering the fireship in person, and gazing into the gloom with his keen but solitary eye.

"Phadrig," said I to my sergeant; "look to it, and see that our company have all their matches and bandoliers in service order."

"I have anticipated your orders, and looked well to their arms and powder," he replied, in his native Gaëlic; but there was an expression in the tall sergeant's dark face, visible below his steel cap, which startled me, apathetic even as I had now become to casual circumstances.

"How is this, Phadrig?" said I: "are you ill, my good man?"

"It is a dark night even for this kind of work, and the darker the better, perhaps," said he; "but of all others in the year, St. Mark's night is the least lucky, either for fighting or ferrying on. I will tell you a story. On this night, fifteen years ago, my father, Dunachadh Bane, and two men of our tribe, who had been sent on a mission from M'Farquhar to M'Ian of Glencoe,

quarrelled with some M'Donalds whom they met on a *creagh*, near Glen Etive and the Black Mountain. They fled by Keanlochleven. The night was dark as this; and like a well at the bottom of its steep, black hills, lay the deep but narrow waters of the Leven. It is said a spirit guards them—a dangerous, a shapeless, and revengeful spirit—whose form is concealed by a cloud, but whose voice is often heard before a storm, shrieking from among the rocks that overhang the lake. In the murky midnight they heard a wild cry tossed after them on the gusty wind, as they rushed down the steep Highland pass; again came the cry, and again loud, shrill, and wailing; now it seemed to come from the dark lake, now from the darker mountains, and now from the blasted pines that overhung the foaming stream which fed the narrow Leven. It curdled their hearts' blood and froze the marrow in their bones—for amid the starless gloom they could see a dark cloud floating over the bosom of the lake; but they were bold and desperate men, and heeding less this terrible warning than the arrows of the M'Donalds, they sprang down the side of the shelving mountain, and reached the still, black, solemn lake, the waters of which were partly frozen. A boat lay among the withered reeds; they leaped in—they put off with an exulting shout, and my father grasped the tiller.

"Black be your end!" shouted a voice like thunder over their heads, and the Glencoe men heard it with terror, as they rushed to the shore of the Leven. "*Bu dubh a dhiol!*" said Phadrig, pausing; "yes—black indeed was my father's fate. The dark vapour descended between the steep hills, a torrent of wind tore up the bosom of the Leven, revealing its ghastly depths; the water rose in billows, and lashed the overhanging hills; again the shriek was heard, the cloud of the angry spirit swept away; but the boat had vanished, for it had been engulfed by the ebbing water. The M'Donalds fled, abandoning in their terror all the cattle they had taken in the creagh. Dunachadh Bane and his two companions had perished, unshriven and unassailed; and long the priest of our tribe, James of Jerusalem, prayed for their souls in the old kirk of Strathdee. Now, Captain Rollo," continued Phadrig, in a low impressive voice, and while drawing closer to me; "ever as St. Mark's night returns, a boat with three men in it is seen to cross the Leven."

"Pshaw, Phadrig—can a stout fellow like you believe this?"

"Firmly as I believe the blessed gospels. Once I saw it myself."

"It must have been mere imagination," said I.

"It was *not*," said he; "the April night was cold and clear. To the sorrow of the poor, the season had been backward, and the snow-wreaths lay deep in glen and corrie. With no com-

panion but my dog, I had come through the savage glen of Laroehmhor, and round by the base of Ben Nevis, on whose peaks the snow seldom melts. I reached Keanlochlevin. Though the month was April, the water lay at my feet a sheet of waveless ice. All was still as death, and my own shadow spread far before me over the wilderness of snow, for the moon was low at the end of the narrow vale. It hung there like a silver shield, broad, round, and full, between a cleft of the rugged mountains.

"I paused a moment to mutter a prayer, and look on the place where my father had perished. The lake lay at my feet, I have said; but I had no fear of the water-spirit, for then the moon was bright. I had a good dram under my belt, and my claymore at my side. Suddenly, I perceived something moving across the frozen surface of the lake—three hundred feet below me; my dog uttered a howl, and crept close to my side. 'Blessed be Heaven!—am I blind?' I exclaimed, pressing a hand upon my eyes; 'am I blind, or dreaming?' A boat with three Highlanders in it passed before me—I knew they were Strathdee men by the cock of their bonnets—one steered, while two pulled the oars; and, like the shadow of a cloud, the boat and its rowers glided across the *hard frozen surface* of the Leven, slowly and noiselessly, until it disappeared under the dark shadow cast by the mountain side across the salt lake at its foot. A deathly chill came over me; my hair stood on end; for I knew that my father's spirit had passed before me.

"Since that hour, captain," said Phadrig, pressing his hand upon his brow, "I have never gone within twenty miles of Ben Nevis, nor would I for all the gold in the hill of Keir. I have gone round by the Braes of Rannoch, by the great desert and the Uise Dhu, rather than pass the glen of the Leven. But how I crossed the mountains—how I came down the Devil's Staircase, and reached Glencoe (for I also was going on a mission from Ian Dhu to M'Ian), the Lord alone knows; for of that dire April night—the night of St. Mark—I remember no more."

Phadrig had just finished this wild story when a blue light was burned low, almost under the counter of the fireship, as a warning to drop our anchors; and they were let go noiselessly, the rope-cables running through hauseholes deluged by buckets of grease, to prevent the sound alarming the enemy, whose batteries swept the boom and its vicinity.

CHAPTER LI.

THE FIRESHIP.

WHILE our vessels hauled up their courses, and swung round with their heads to the wind, the fireship, favoured by the obscurity which concealed her, and by a north-east wind, with all her sails and studding-sails set, ran right towards the boom, which closed the narrow *Strait*; for the promontory on which the town stands closes in the extremity of the outer harbour, and divides it from the inner fiord. The boom itself was an enormous log of Memel timber, to which a number of masts, yards, and spars were lashed. At each end strong cables secured it to the shore. Immediately within it lay a number of ships full of imperial stores, and on board of these the crews must have kept out a sleepy watch that night, or the northern mist had blinded them.

The warlike Christian had seen the fireship, which was about a hundred and fifty tons burden, constructed under his own eye; she was crammed to the hatches with combustibles, and fitted with grappling irons, to seize and destroy the boom and shipping. She was fitted up with troughs full of powder and sealed pitch; these communicated with her fire-barrels and hammers for blowing open the ports, at which the flames were to be emitted. Her decks were sheeted over with powder, rosin, sulphur, tar, pitch, and grease. Her gunwale was surrounded by savings of brushwood, having the bushends all laid outwards, forming a thick hedge, which was saturated in the same conglomeration of inflammable matter with which she was loaded from keel to hatches; and with which her whole rigging and masts, sails and running cordage, were thickly coated; while barrels of oil and tar, powder and other preparations, were piled upon her deck.

Through the dark gloom we discerned—or imagined we could discern—this floating magazine of destruction standing steadily on towards the boom, at a safe distance from which our ships had come to anchor. All the large boats were lowered, and noiselessly two thousand armed men, with the old blades of our own regiment leading the van, slowly and with well-muffled oars put off towards the shore.

Ian with my company—once his own—composed entirely of brave men of his own name and kindred, led the way. Red McAlpine and Kildon followed in the next boat, with their companies; then came the remainder of our Highlanders in pin-

naces; then the Danish musketeers of the King's regiment, and the French companies of the gallant Count de Montgomerie.

The boats grounded at a distance from the shore; there was a murmur of discontent among the French and Danes; but now, as at Fehmarn, our bold Scottish lads slung their muskets, sprang overboard, formed line in the water, and, grasping each other's hands, led the way towards the shore.

"Softly and quickly, comrades!" cried Ian Dhu, whose head, surmounted by the entire eagle's wing, towered above all others, as he advanced to the front with a colour in his hand; "we shall be at them with our pikes before helmets are buckled or matches blown."

At that moment the fireship blew up!

After firing the train with his own royal hand, King Christian had dropped into a small boat, and been pulled on board of the *Anna Catharina*, on the poop of which he stood anxiously watching the effect of his skill.

The fireship reached the boom, and running full tilt against it, was retained there by her grappels; the lighted trains rushed through all parts of the ship, and in a moment the troughs, the decks, the rigging and the tarred sails, were enveloped in one vast pyramid of roaring flame, which shed a lurid glow on the waters around it and the shore before us. Brighter and brighter it grew; we could see in the foreground the whole outline of Eckernförd, then esteemed the prettiest town in Juteland, with its high old German gables and wooden spire; the long rows of trees that shaded its streets, and surrounded the half circular harbour; the barricades which closed its avenues; the palisaded breastwork we had come to storm, and the long bridge with its Tollbooth bristling with cannon. Brighter yet and broader grew that sheet of wavering light, and tipped with it, as they rose and fell, the waves of the Baltic rolled like billows of liquid fire; the low flat shore on which they broke was bathed in alternate glows of yellow flame and dusky-red, as the various combustibles ignited in succession.

We saw the white froth amid which the vast boom was surging and chafing; we saw distinctly the masts, spars, and rigging of the storeships within; we saw the casements of the town—even the gilt vane on the church spire shone in this glorious but terrible flush of flame; while the hoarse drums beat to arms, and we heard the loud and sudden murmur, as from a crowd of startled men, arise within the town. The Imperialists rushed to their posts, and in three minutes their helmets were seen glittering in lines behind the barricades, for the town, from which all the inhabitants had fled, was but rudely and hastily fortified.

Like a volcano showering a million of burning brands over the whole förd, the fireship blew up with a shock which made the

waters vibrate and lash the level shore, while the concussion was felt at the bottom of every ship in the fleet.

The great boom broke in two like a withered reed. A momentary silence followed; then, from the vast height to which they had been shot by the explosion, we heard the burning pieces fall hissing into the water. But their expiring blaze was almost immediately renewed by the storeships, which caught fire, and enabled the Danish vessels to cannonade the town, from the galling roofs of which the bricks and tiles flew in showers through the air, as the round shot boomed among them.

Having formed in the water in three columns, under the count de Montgomerie, with the Highlanders in front, we advanced pell-mell to storm the gruff and stockade which enclosed the town, on that side where a gate opened towards the road from Kiel; from these works the enemy opened a brisk fire on us. Ian Dhu, an officer as skilful as he was brave, sent Captain-lieutenant Sir Patrick Mackay, with fifty musketeers of his own company, into a lofty house, from the windows of which they swept the stockades in flank. Under cover of this we stormed them with comparative ease, throwing ourselves into the gruff, officers and men, pikes, musketeers, and colours; we rushed from thence up the rough glacis, climbing with one hand and fighting with the other, though, by the storm of lead which rained upon our ranks, many a brave fellow was swept back into the slough of the ditch to die among its mud and slime.

Torn down or hewn to pieces in some places, surmounted in others, the palisades were won, and Ian Dhu, though bleeding from three wounds, had the honour first to place St. Andrew's cross on the summit, and, with a wild yell of triumph, the hardy Highlanders closed up beneath it, and broad over their heads its blue silk folds were rustling in the midnight blast. In the deadly *mêlée* that ensued here, the Austrians were overmatched by our Scottish cavaliers, who used their long claymores with both hands, hewing down with the edge, while the former only gave point with their slender rapiers, which were much less effective. I found this particularly the case when encountering a gigantic Spanish officer (for there were three companies of Castilians in the town). He lunged at me incessantly; but parrying one terrible thrust with my claymore, after narrowly escaping being run through by a demi-lance, I overthrew the lion by a backhanded blow from my dirk.

Another Spanish cavalier, a tall and powerful man, wearing a surcoat of bright steel, was disarmed by Phadrig Mhor, at whom he discharged his pistols after surrender.

"Yield—yield!" cried Phadrig in Gaelic, "or I'll run a yard of my halbert into your haggis-bag!"

"Quartel, señor Valeroso!" exclaimed the Spaniard; but the prayer came too late; for by one blow of his Lochaber axe, Phadrig, who was not blessed with over much patience, sliced his head in two like a Swedish turnip, cutting him through-bone and steel helmet to the neck.

The Imperialists now gave way from the gate of Kiel along the whole line of ramparts, and retired through the streets with great precipitation to the church, which they entered in confusion, and followed so closely by our soldiers, that many Highlanders entered with them, and were shot or taken. Save a hundred or so, who were killed as they retired through the streets, all reached the church, got in, barricaded the doors, and from every part of the edifice opened a terrible fire upon us.

Montgomerie's Frenchmen assailed one flank, the king's Danish regiment another, and Ian led us to the assault of the great door; but for a time we failed to make any impression upon it. The night was bleak, dark, and exceedingly stormy; the wind shook our standards and rustled our lofty plumes, and we heard it (during the pauses of the musketry) howling through the louvre-bearded spire of the church, and the high gables of the old houses; but the pauses in the fusillade were few and far between. Through the windows and from behind the planks and benches with which they had barricaded them, four or five companies of Imperialists continued to fire upon us; and the bright red streaks of flame, as they burst forth incessantly above, below, and on every side, lighted up the quaint facade of the old church, the greater part of which was of wood. Every moment our bullets tore away large splinters. A company of Irishmen in the belfry made a terrible slaughter among my company, on whom they shot down in security without receiving a ball in return, for their position was too elevated for our muskets to reach them. Ian became greatly excited by the loss of so many of his soldiers and kinsmen.

"Count of Montgomerie!" he exclaimed; "let cannon be brought and the door blown in! My brave followers—the children of my father's people—shall not perish thus!"

"Dioul, my colonel!" added Kildon, whose company united its efforts with mine to burst open the door, before which the dead encumbered the steps three deep, and which resounded beneath our mingled blows like the head of a gigantic drum; "let us blow the d—d kirk up, and, by my father's hand, I will place the first stone of your cairn."

"May the ashes of these Spaniards be scattered on the waters!" added M'Alpine in the same forcible language, and staggering as a bullet grazed his helmet; "for, by the grey stone of M'Gregor I believe they are the same men who so cruelly slew old Dunbar and five hundred of our gallant hearts at Bredenburg."

"Yea—after surrender, in cold blood," said Lumsdaine, my lieutenant, the sole survivor of that affair; "I know them by the fashion of their doublets—forward then—let us cut to pieces this kennel of blood-hounds!"

"Tullach Ard!" cried the Mackenzies of Kildon's company.

"Cairn na cuimhne!" added my men of Strathdee.

"Revenge! remember Dunbar and Bredenburg!" cried the whole battalion, with a wild Highland hurrah; and the soldiers redoubled their efforts, while the dying and dead fell fast on every side.

Suddenly there arose a cry of—

"The vaults—the church vaults are full of powder—five hundred barrels—Bredenburg! Bredenburg mercy! let us blow them up!"

This proved to be actually the case. Whether it was a mere speculation of our soldiers, or that they had been informed of the circumstances by some wounded Holsteiner (who had been compelled to serve the Austrians), I know not; but it was immediately acted upon.

Heedless of the leaden storm which was poured upon them, Phadrig Mhor, and a score of the brave fellows, rushed close to the walls of the church, beat down the bars of certain wooden gratings which admitted air to the vaults, and threw in five or six fireballs—engines formed of every combustible. These filled the whole basement story with a deluge of light, as they blazed, roared, and rolled about like flaming dragons; and to the eyes of a few revealed, in the very centre of the place, a goodly pile of wooden powder-barrels.

"Retire—retire!" was the cry, and our men fell back on all sides, dragging with them several of the wounded, who were unable to crawl away; but we had scarcely retreated fifty paces down the main street, each side of which was bordered by stately beech-trees, when the earth shook beneath our feet, a blaze of yellow light filled the windows of the church, its broad roof of slates was shot into the air and rent asunder, to descend like rain upon the streets; a mighty column of fire poured upwards from the crater formed by the walls; I saw them gape and rend in every direction; the taper spire shook like a willow wand, then tumbled and vanished with a crash. One half the edifice was blown into the air, the other half fell inwards. In an instant all became dark (save where the store-ships, half burned to the water-edge, shed a sickly light upon the half-ruined town), and we heard a shower of stones, beams, slates, and materials of every kind, falling on the tops of the houses and into the street around us. With these came down many a scorched and shattered fragment of a human form; for at least five hundred men had, in one moment, been blown into eternity.

Among these were a hundred stout-hearted Irishmen of Butler's regiment.

Many of our men were severely injured by the *débris* of the explosion; after which I remember little more of that night, being struck senseless by a piece of falling timber.

I have a dim recollection of being borne away somewhere; and then of feeling the soft hands of a woman chafing mine, and pouring a cooling essence on my brow.

I thought of Ernestine; and then, as if that dear thought had conjured up her image and her presence, I seemed to hear her voice murmuring in my ear, as she wept and mourned bitterly.

Book the Ninth.

CHAPTER LII.

THE SISTERS.

WHILE I am thus disposed of at Eckernförd, it may not be out of place to relate the adventures of the fair sisters (on their being decoyed from Nyekiöbing), as I afterwards learned from them, and so far as I can remember.

In the course of this narrative, many a long-forgotten scene and face have come back to my memory by pursuing a train of thought. At first, it was my intention to have related only the battles and sieges wherein our valiant Scots of the old invincible regiment of Strathnaver distinguished themselves; but I have been compelled to linger fondly over the past, and thus long-buried thoughts and hopes, the sentiments of my earlier years, have come back to me in all their strength and freshness. Hence I can relate the faith and pride of Ernestine, and the love of poor Gabrielle—one man's knavery and another man's valour—as if the events of those stirring times had all occurred but yesterday.

On board the dogger which bore the sisters from Falster, were only Bandolo, his friend Bernhard, the amiable woodman of Korslack (who has been already introduced to the reader), and three sailors of Dantzic, to whom the craft belonged.

Bandolo was disguised as a well-fed Lutheran clergyman of Glückstadt, and Bernhard acted as his servant, and had knots of black riband on each of his shoulders. He had brought to Ernestine a feigned message, that the count her father was dying of wounds in Holstein; although quite aware that, by the intrigues and jealousy of old Tilly, he had been summoned to Vienna by the Emperor, who—as it was currently reported—now viewed him with the utmost coldness. Bandolo had been despatched by Tilly towards Assens and Falster, to inquire into the number of the Danish forces, and the probable movements of their king; but hearing that the count's daughters were at Nyekiöbing, he immediately conceived the project of conveyin-

them away; and as he considered that he had now amassed a sufficient sum to realise the dream of his ambition—a Hanoverian countship—he resolved to retire from public life, to repose upon his laurels, with the high-born bride whom Tilly, in his cynical and mischievous spirit, had urged him by all means to procure; for secretly the generalissimo owed the colonel-general of the cavalry a mortal grudge.

By a profitable speculation, Bandolo had sold the younger sister, Gabrielle, to Count Merodé for a thousand ducats; and, being highly pleased with his investment, that gentle commander—who had compelled a Holstein merchant to furnish the ducats under terror of musket-shot, and place them in his hands—was impatiently awaiting her arrival at the strong fortress of Fredricksort, on the gulf of Kiel in Danische-wald, the capital of which is Eckernfiörd. The castle was occupied by the soldiers of the count; who, by a despatch from Vienna, had been desired to constitute himself governor of all that district, the poor boors of which were nearly driven mad by the severity with which he exacted tribute.

Bandolo's dogger sailed towards Fehmarn, where he gave such information to Colonel Butler as enabled that officer to afford us a warm reception. The scout-master then bore away towards the coast of Danische-wald; but on both sides of the isle of Fehmarn he encountered such tremendous gales, that the whole thoughts and energies of himself and his accomplice were occupied by fears for their own safety: thus, without the sisters being disturbed by their attentions or insults, the dogger entered the gulf of Kiel, and anchored off the Wohlder shore.

Confined to the little cabin during this cold and dreary voyage of nearly a hundred and fifty miles, and being wholly occupied by anxiety to reach their father, the sisters had failed to observe the very remarkable conduct of their guardian, the Lutheran clergyman, and his valet, who seemed to be on the most familiar terms with each other; and who, when the wind blew, and the dogger dipped surging down into the trough of the angry sea, drank schnaps out of the same horn, and swore a few round oaths as emphatically as a couple of Merodeurs.

A large black doublet, well bombasted in front, white clerical bands, and black satin knee-breeches, with a white wig and smoothly-shaven chin, so completely metamorphosed Bandolo into a sleek oily clergyman, with a somewhat comical but leering eye, that his own mother would not have recognised the bravo she had brought into the world—that dreaded and avowed bravo, who was usually to be seen loitering like a bull-dog about the door of Tilly's tent, wearing a leather doublet, and a belt stuck full of poniards, a long lovelock, a rapier five feet in

length, and a visage bloated by beer and excess of every description.

Whatever strange ideas might have floated through his evil brain, or whatever promptings to mischief the circumstance of these two beautiful girls being far out on the open ocean, and completely at the mercy of him and Bernhard, might have been suggested by his bad angel, thank Heaven! which sent the stormy wind to furrow up the deep and roll the little bark upon its waters like a cork, their coward hearts were solely occupied by fears for their own safety—fears which every bottle of schnaps in the locker could not allay. Thus, without the least suspicion of the trick which had been played them, or the trap into which they had fallen, the sisters saw, from a window in the little cabin, the setting sun of the 20th of April reddening the shores of Holstein, as the dogger ran into the little gulf of Kiel.

Ernestine was pleased to perceive that Gabrielle had revived a little during this brief voyage. Either the separation from Ian, a transference to new scenes, or that all her thoughts were with her dying father, had produced this salutary effect; and she hoped that in time this passion, which she deemed so degrading even to her impulsive nature, would soon be forgotten like a dream.

Instead of entering the harbour of any of the large towns, the dogger was anchored off a miserable little village, inhabited by poor people, who subsisted by dressing the skins of squirrels, which abound in that neighbourhood.

The first object of Pandolo was to separate the sisters, and, without creating any alarm, to exchange Gabrielle for the thousand ducats of Count Merodé, whose garrison of Fredricksort was but a few miles off. About sunset he presented himself in the cabin, and, with all the suavity of manner he could muster, requested that "the ladies would prepare for going shoreward."

During the short voyage they had seen but little of him; for, as I have already mentioned, the stormy weather had given him ample occupation elsewhere; and in truth, he was invariably wed into a state of unpleasant stupidity in their presence, and found himself almost unable to address them. This wretched man—this spy and assassin—steeped to the lips in a thousand secret crimes and dishonourable acts, found his blustering spirit and savage heart quail before the dignity of perfect innocence, and the angelic purity which pervaded the presence of Ernestine and Gabrielle.

Arrayed in his white wig, ample black doublet, white bands and Geneva cloak, like a Lutheran churchman, and wearing a broad velvet hat with a steeple-crown, an enormous pair of spectacles, and a silver-headed cane dangling at his dexter wrist,

to increase the respectability of his appearance, Bandolo presented a hand to each of the sisters, and conducted them into the boat, by which they were rowed ashore. Bernard of Korslack, dressed in modest dark livery, carried the mails and saddle-bags; but Ernestine remarked that there was one mail, which the worthy clergyman averred to be full of MS. sermons, but would scarcely trust out of his hand for a single moment, and which seemed to be very heavy, and his own peculiar care.

In fact, this mail afterwards proved to be filled with gold, and ample orders on the Imperial treasury, signed by Wallenstein, by Tilly, and Count Leslie of Balquhan, high chamberlain of the Empire—the dear-earned fruits of a long career of espionage and atrocity; and on the contents of that beloved mail, Bandolo (that human compound of avarice and cruelty) based all his ambitious hopes of future rank; for it contained the price of his expected county.

Now, when in the open boat, and when the bright flush of the setting sun shone along the rippling water, Ernestine for the first time remarked, with undefined uneasiness, the peculiar aspect of those who accompanied them. The countenance of the clergyman—he called himself Doctor, having taken degrees at Leyden—was somewhat livid, and marked by two or three unseemly scars; but he might have served as a chaplain in the army, or fought a few college duels. He had certainly a very remarkable expression of eye; and, whichever way Ernestine turned, it was fixed upon her in a manner that made her feel inexpressibly uncomfortable; but the moment her calm, steady, and inquiring glance met his, the reverend doctor turned abruptly, and gazed in another direction.

Bernhard, the valet, had a somewhat bloated countenance, and sleepy red eyes, like those of a sot; with a continual expression of suppressed merriment about them, as if he would gladly have indulged himself in a hoarse laugh, but dared not.

Gabrielle did not see these things; her mind was too intently occupied by the shore they were nearing, by the expectation of embracing her father, and by heartfelt satisfaction to exchange the miseries of the dingy little cabin for the comforts and confidence experienced on terra firma, to observe either the eyes or noses of those who were conducting her there.

"What is the name of this village, Herr P?" asked Ernestine, as the boat ran alongside a little jetty built of large rough stones.

"I do not know, madam," replied Bandolo, adjusting his barnacles, and gazing intently at the half-dozen of red-tiled cottages occupied by the squirrel-curriers; "do you, Bernhard?"

"Nay, not I—how should I? I never was in Danische-wald before."

"Then, do you know how far it is from this to Fredricksort?"

"Where the count awaits you—ten miles—is it not so, Bernhard?"

Bernhard growled an assent.

"Ah, if we should be too late to reach my father!" said Gabrielle, clasping her hands; "and we have been so many hours yonder little vessel."

"What is Fredricksort?" asked Ernestine.

"A castle of vast strength, lady."

"And what troops are with our father there?"

"I do not know, *gräfin*," replied Bandolo, for he knew that he have mentioned Merodé and his Merodeurs might excite suspicion; "do you know, Bernhard?"

"Why, Herr Doctor," stammered the pretended valet, "I thought that you knew very well that the regiment of——"

"Carlstein—oh yes!" interrupted Bandolo just in time, but being his valet savagely out of the corners of his barnacles; how could I forget! yes, lady, the musketeers of Carlstein—we know them better than I do—occupy the fortress."

"Musketeers!" reiterated Ernestine; "our father's regiment *Cavalry!*"

"To be sure—how could I forget—you blundering ass, Bernhard!—'Tis my valet who makes such mistakes; but here we are. Welcome to Wohlder, ladies!" said Bandolo, raising his hat, and with it his long white wig, a mistake by which he nearly discovered his black hair and face, by which Ernestine might have recognised the terrible familiar of Count Tilly, who had been pointed out to her on two occasions—once in Vienna, and once in the Imperial camp.

During this brief conversation, Bandolo had experienced all the uneasiness already described; and his admiration for the fine person of Ernestine combated with restraint and fear, which at times kindled a spark of rage in his heart, and made him almost hate her for possessing a power that awed him by a glance. Yet Ernestine was quite unconscious of possessing this power, and knew not that it was required.

Feeling, she knew not why, a sentiment of disdain for her seducers, she relapsed into silence, and permitted herself and Gabrielle to be led to a cottage, the poor occupants of which received them with the utmost respect. This was increased by the appearance of the leathern mails, and still more by a piece of gold, which Bandolo placed in the hand of the goodman of the cottage, requesting him to search the whole neighbourhood, and hire horses for Fredricksort, whither they were travelling on the service of the King of Denmark.

The husbande replied, that "close by there was a farm, the

goodman of which had been cruelly murdered last week by the Merodeurs in Fredricksort; and whose widow, he believed, would gladly lend the Herr her spouse's horses for a small consideration, as she and her children were starving. Count Merodé's men having made everything march, from the haystacks in the yard to the eggs in the coop."

"Away, then, boor; get these horses, and this shall be the happiest night of your life."

"What was the peasant saying, reverend sir?" asked the anxious Ernestine on the departure of the Jutelander, whose language she did not understand.

"Alas, lady!" said Bandolo, seating himself with an air of dejection; "prepare yourself for melancholy intelligence. The poor count—ah me!—well, what a world it is!"

"My father—what of my poor father?" asked both girls together, rushing to his side with their eyes full of tears.

"He is still lingering at Fredricksort, but life is scarcely expected for him; and the emperor has sent his own physician, Herr Blyster, to attend him."

"Oh! the dear, good emperor!" exclaimed Gabrielle, with sorrowful ardour.

"Herr Blyster!" mused Ernestine; "I did not think that was the name of the emperor's physician." Neither it was; but the name was the suggestion of Bandolo's own imagination, which sometimes was not a very happy one.

"Trust in the Lord, lady—trust in the Lord!" said he, turning up his eyes.

Gabrielle clung to her sister, and did nothing but weep. Bernhard stood behind them, making grimaces and grotesque contortions of visage at his reverend master, who one moment seemed inclined to laugh, and the next to swear, at a folly which might undo all, and perhaps prevent their obtaining peacefully the Count of Merodé's thousand ducats, of which Master Bernhard was to receive a good share—as Bandolo had promised faithfully, but without the least intention of giving him a stiver.

Darkness set in; the poor woman of the cottage lighted a solitary candle, and from her cupboard brought a glass of birch-wine for each of the ladies, and another of schnaps for the Herr and his valet.

Ernestine was just expressing to Gabrielle her impatience to be gone—her uneasiness to be in this unknown cottage at night on an enemy's coast, with two strangers—for when in the day with the sailors she did not feel herself so desolate—when the boor returned with the horses, two of which had side-saddles and they all mounted hastily.

After securely buckling his beloved portmanteau to the crupper of his horse, after paying the peasant, and after carefully examining in the dark four small pistols and two poniards, which he carried under his clerical doublet, Señor Bandolo whispered to Bernhard the project he wished to accomplish—the quiet separation of the sisters by a little piece of finesse, which was certain they would never suspect or discover, until too late to retrieve themselves. It was simply this:—

He had learned from the boor which couple of the four horses were the swiftest, and on them he mounted Bernhard and Gabrielle, instructing the former to spur on to the front, and heel off by a certain bypath towards Fredricksort; while he, with the other sister, meant to ride slowly, and pursue a path quite different towards a certain cottage, which they both knew lay in the wood of Eckernfiörd. There Bernhard was to meet them, and bring the ducats of Count Merodé—the price of Gabrielle.

"Now, ladies," said Bandolo, "are you good horsewomen?"

"Ernestine was the best at Vienna," said Gabrielle, whipping her Holsteiner, which caracolled under her light weight.

"Gabrielle—Gabrielle!" exclaimed her eldest sister; "take care what you are about, madcap! You will unhorse yourself and me too. Will she not, reverend sir?"

"Now, ladies, we have ten miles of clear road before us, and the moon will soon rise. Let us start by pairs along this bridle road, and see which couple will first reach Fredricksort."

"Away—I shall be first with our dear father," said Gabrielle, anxious to keep in front, and giving a lash to her Holsteiner, which shot away at a headlong pace. Bernhard dashed on by her side, for he was a good horseman, having been a valet to Merodé at Vienna, where he had been scourged and dismissed for selling his master's cloaks and doublets.

Ernestine and Bandolo followed at full gallop; but as the road was narrow, the bravo contrived to incommode her horse and his own in such a manner that their speed was considerably retarded. Bernhard and Gabrielle bore on at an uninterrupted pace, and, despite all the entreaties of Ernestine, disappeared into the darkness in front. This was the very thing Bandolo had hoped to accomplish.

"Do not be alarmed, grafine, they will not reach the fortress ten minutes before us," said he, quite enchanted by the sudden success of his scheme.

At last he and Ernestine passed on their right the narrow path which led towards the gulf of Kiel, and by which he knew that Bernhard and Gabrielle had struck off to the castle of Fredrick-

sort; and far along the level way his quick and practised ear detected the tramp of their horses' hoofs. He passed it, and spurring on, slyly administered now and then a lash to the horse of Ernestine, urging it along a road which he knew conducted them straight to the place of rendezvous—the solitary cottage in the forest of Eckernfiörd.

Ernestine whipped and caressed her horse. Every pace the poor girl supposed was bringing her nearer and more near to the couch of her dying father.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE FOREST OF ECKERNFIÖRD.

BANDOLO, who knew every foot of the way, avoided the villages and rode towards Eckernfiörd, which, from the landing-place, was double the distance he had mentioned to Ernestine as the space to be travelled. As she was too acute not to perceive this, after they had ridden without speaking for some miles in the dark (for there was no moon, and scarcely a star visible, as the clouds were coming up in heavy masses from the Baltic on their right), she made some inquiries about this fortress, where, as he had said, her father commanded, and how far it might yet be distant.

"It should be just beyond those trees, lady," replied the disguised spy.

"Should?" retorted Ernestine, in great displeasure; "are you not quite certain that it is?"

"How can one be certain of anything in so dark a night? But trust in the Lord, lady—trust in the Lord!"

"Herr Doctor, you are very fond of repeating that tiresome phrase; but remember, sir, that at present I trust to *you*, and it seems that you are leading me towards a dense forest.

"Through that forest lies our way, *gräfine*. I did not make the road. If I had, I should perhaps have taken it round by the shore of the haven; but, as it lies through the forest, we must pursue it, or remain where we are."

The narrow horse-path, which hitherto had been bordered only by smooth green meadows, divided by quickset hedges, now became gradually lost in that forest of tall trees which lies between Eckernfiörd and Kiel;* and so dense became the

* I know not whether the forest referred to by our cavalier is still extant. It was so in 1702. See *Travels in the Retinue of the English Envoy, 1702*—printed at the Ship in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1707.

entwined branches and other obstructions incident to a wood growing in a state of nature, that their horses could scarcely move at times, and Bandolo now dispensed with his circular baracades (a severe impediment to the vision of one who did not require them), and gazed around with all the air of a man who had completely lost himself.

"Now, sir," said the impatient Ernestine, "what a scrape you have brought me into!—separated from my sister, who cannot have come this way, else we should have found her in this labyrinth; and separated also from my dear father, who may die before I reach Fredricksort, and while we are fruitlessly wandering in this provoking wood: besides, there may be wild animals or robbers in it, and you are, of course, without arms."

"Heaven forbid, lady, I should ever trust to other weapons than those of the spirit. *Maldicion—Maldicion de Dios!*" he growled between his teeth; "if once I have her safe in the cottage of old Dame Krümpel, I will make her pay dearly for all the trouble her pride has cost me, and for having my face scratched in this rascally thicket."

"What did you say, Herr Doctor?"

"Only a prayer, that we may not meet with any robbers or wild animals, as you said—ha—ha!"

"Or broken soldiers."

"Or with Bandolo," he added.

"Count Tilly's spy?" said Ernestine; "'tis rumoured that he knows every foot of ground in Denmark, so I wish that we could meet with him; though he is a guilty wretch of whom even the Merodeurs speak with contempt and horror."

Bandolo uttered a low, ferocious laugh. Ruffian as he was, and callous to every sentiment of humanity, her words stung him to the soul; for there was something inexpressibly cutting in this hearty and undisguised contempt, as expressed by a beautiful woman. He writhed under it, and a savage glow of mingled triumph and revenge spread through his breast, as he exultingly contemplated the terror, the catastrophe, and the downfall that were awaiting her. His eagerness sharpened his faculties.

"I see a light—a spark—to our left. This way, lady," said he, seizing the bridle of her horse, and conducting her down a narrow track, where the pine-trunks grew so close that there was scarcely room for steed and rider to pass between them; but in a few minutes they reached a small and rudely-built cottage, which stood by the margin of a little tarn. It was the place where Bernhard was to rejoin Bandolo, and pay over the price of poor Gabrielle.

The bravo alighted from his saddle, and, fastening the bridles

of both horses to the branch of a tree, threw open the cottage door, and led in Ernestine.

An oil-lamp shed a faint light on the interior of this poor habitation, the furniture of which consisted of a table and couple of stools, of such rough construction that the bark yet adhered to the wood. Here and there a naked spar of the rough wooden roof came out of the obscurity in which dust, cobwebs, and darkness involved it: the floor was of hard-beaten clay. The cottage consisted of what we Scots called a *but* and a *ben*, or two apartments. One end of the outer was spanned by the rude lintel of a wide chimney, within which, and close to a few smouldering embers, an old hag, with hands like a kite's claws, sat on a block of wood, skinning squirrels and chattering over her work. She looked up, and Bandolo, as he expected, recognised Dame Krümpel, who, after her expulsion from Glückstadt by order of the puissant burgomaster, Herr Dubbelsteirn, had found her way to the eastern coast of the peninsula.

They greeted each other in a dialect of the German so guttural that Ernestine did not understand it. Then the old woman snatched up her lamp, and, holding it aloft, surveyed with her fierce eyes—which were keen and deep as two gimlet-holes—the tall figure of Ernestine, who, on seeing this repulsive old woman approach with her shrivelled hands dyed in blood, shrunk back, and drew herself up to her full height, while a disdainful expression stole over her beautiful face, on which her broad Spanish hat and long black feather cast an impressive shadow.

Old Krümpel croaked and grinned as she set down her iron lamp, and quietly resumed her occupation.

Bandolo now brought in his heavy portmanteau, which he carefully deposited on the table; he then placed beside it two leathern bottles, which he took from his pockets, after securing the cottage-door.

"Be seated, madame—and here Krümpel, old hag! get us glasses, cups, or whatever you have; I long for a taste of schnaps, as doubtless the lady does for a drop of kirschwasser—for I have both."

"I beseech you, sir, to lose no time in procuring a guide," said Ernestine, whose heart was bursting with impatience, grief, and alarm.

"A guide—for where?"

"Fredricksort."

"Content yourself, my pretty one; what the devil would you do at Fredricksort?" he asked, abandoning all his assumed manner. "Surely one of you is quite enough among the rough Merodeurs."

Ernestine was petrified by this speech, and still more when

the pretended clergyman threw aside his wig, revealing his coal-black hair, and that long and peculiar lock by which he was generally known; and, opening his ample doublet, displayed below his cases of poniards and pistols.

"Maldicion de Dios! ha, ha! what use is there in masquerading any longer? I am Bandolo, Madame Ernestine, and we may as well be friends at once; so give me a kiss to begin with, though I *am* one upon whom even the wild Merodeurs look *with contempt and horror!*"

Hé bluntly approached her, but paused; for the expression of her eyes arrested him, and he quailed before it—he, Bandolo!

Never did terror, anger, and aversion lend a brighter flash to more beautiful eyes than those of Ernestine; and their lofty gaze arrested the insolence of Bandolo, charming the steps of one whom the laws of neither God nor man could bind. He growled an oath and a laugh together; sat down and took a mouthful of schnaps. Ernestine turned anxiously towards the old woman; but that worthy appeared to have neither ears nor eyes for what was passing, and was tearing the skin from the body of a squirrel with the utmost unconcern.

Disdaining to say a word, Ernestine grasped her riding-rod, gave another fiery glance at Bandolo with her tearless eyes, and boldly prepared to retire. Seizing her arm, he forced her into a seat, and placing his back against the door, burst into a shout of derisive laughter, which made her blood curdle.

The thought of Gabrielle, away, she knew not where, with this man's companion, filled her whole soul with alarm; and in that thought all sense of her own danger was swept away. Terror almost paralysed her, and she burst into tears.

Bandolo eyed her with a strange glance of mingled ferocity, perplexity, and admiration; for in every impulse—his anger, his avarice, and all his passions—this man was a mere animal. He took another draught of the strong schnaps, and warned her to take care what she was about, and what she did and said now; for she was alone with one who would not stand trifling—alone in the heart of a forest where no living thing could hear her outcries but the birds in their nests, or the foxes in their holes—that she was perfectly helpless, and beyond all rescue.

Alone—and with him!

CHAPTER LIV.

ULRICK, COUNT OF MERODE.

LET us see how these two lovers conducted themselves towards the fair sisters whom they had entrapped;—the ruffian, who was laudably ambitious of becoming a count; and the count, who was in no way ashamed of being esteemed an accomplished ruffian.

At the narrow path indicated by Bandolo, his accomplice Bernhard had wheeled off towards the castle of Fredricksort; and its square outline, with little minarets at the angles, soon rose before the riders. High and sloping bastions faced with stone, surrounded by stockades and bristling with brass cannon, enclosed this stately castle, the lights of which were visible between the trees and plantations with which the fields were interspersed.

"My father—my father!" murmured Gabrielle, whipping on her horse; "but where is Ernestine? Ah, heavens! I do not hear the hoofs of her horse, nor those of the doctor's nag. Ah me—if they should lose the way, and fall among Danes! Does your master know the country well?"

"Well? none know it better between the gulf of Liim and the Elbe; but now that we are arrived, I pray you to rein in your horse, lady, lest the sentinels fire on us."

They were now close to the fosse, the bridge of which was drawn up: beyond it, a deep archway yawned in the fortifications, and near it the figure of a soldier was dimly visible. He challenged in pure German.

In the same language Bernhard replied, and in her eagerness Gabriel did so too. On hearing a woman's voice, there was a shout of laughter from the sentinels, and from several soldiers of the barrier-guard, who were loitering at the gate and smoking their long German pipes. The bridge was lowered, and, as soon as the travellers had crossed, it was raised again; a lantern was brought from the guard-house, and Gabrielle found herself surrounded by soldiers—by Merodeurs!—or the Merodistas, as the Spaniards named them—a term now synonymous with one of the greatest of human crimes—for such was the atrocious character of the regiment of Merodé.

"Merodeurs!" said Gabrielle, shrinking back on seeing the ferocious visages, the ragged uniforms, and the rusty corslets of those who surrounded her, with their features seamed by scars,

floats with beer, and their eyes expressive of the most cruel and sinister thoughts that could animate the minds of men, hardened by civil crime, by the camp and the jail, the scourge and the fetter, the riddlings of Vienna, the scum of European wars—for murderers, deserters, and vagabonds of every description, readily found pay, plunder, and service in the ranks of Merodé—where they hardened each other afresh by their ferocious example. At times they quarrelled with each other on parade, and even when before the enemy, and exchanged a few slashes and shots in the colonel's presence. Their officers were all broken gamesters, hardened roustes and high-born desperadoes; but the greatest and the worst was the count himself. Such was the battalion of Merodé; and never, perhaps, since an army was constituted, were so many thousand such rascals assembled under baton, to surpass the ruelities of Nero, and disgrace the glorious profession of arms.

"Bernhard, your master told us that the castle was occupied by my father's regiment of horse."

But Master Bernhard did not hear Gabrielle's expostulating one: for having recognised several old acquaintances of the prison-house and Rasp-haus among the Merodeurs, he was engaged in a lively conversation, the slang terms of which made it totally incomprehensible to the startled girl, who had now some secret misgivings of betrayal and misfortunes to come. However, she dismounted without assistance, and addressing one whom, by his ample scarf and boots edged with lace, she recognised to be a sergeant, said,—

"Lead me immediately to the count—for it is most improper that I should loiter here."

"This way, then, madame," said the halberdier, with a bow which Gabrielle mistook for politeness, as she did not perceive how he winked to one soldier, thrust his tongue in his cheek to another, poked a third in the ribs, and set the whole guard laughing as he guided her into the body of the fortress; but she heard them saying—"Oho, Kaspar! 'tis a girl who seeks the count."

"Der Teufel! ha! ha!"

"For so dainty a bird, what a taste she must have! Old schwindler."

"I warrant me, Schwaschbücker, the count will scarcely have eyes even for so pretty a woman by this time."

"Ah, my Heavens!" sighed the poor girl, appalled by these brutal observations; "my poor father must indeed be dying, or discipline would never be so relaxed. And Ernestine—where is she loitering? Quick—quick, good sir! conduct me to the count."

The sergeant, who did not seem quite so bad as his comrades, led her straight towards a hall, the uproar proceeding from which made her poor little heart sink within her.

"Oh, if my misgivings become verified! It is impossible that my father can be in life," she thought; "if so, neither in camp nor quarters dare even the Merodeurs have been so outrageous and disorderly."

The hall was lighted, partly by flambeaux placed here and there irregularly, and partly by an enormous fire that blazed in the wide chimney, and was fed by doors and shutters, &c., brought from other parts of the edifice. The tapestry with which it was hung, and which represented the wars of Frederick II. with the Ditmarschen, was torn down in some places, leaving the bare wall exposed; in others, the fragments yet remaining were waving in the currents of air that floated through the vast apartment, and made the wavering flambeaux stream like yellow ribands.

At the long table nearly a dozen of Merodé's officers were seated at a debauch, which seemed to have lasted pretty long. All were richly, even magnificently dressed, and had their long curled hair and moustaches dressed to perfection. Their doublets, cloaks, and breeches were of the newest fashion, and of the finest Florence silk and Genoa velvet; and the enormous chains of pure gold which encircled their necks, and to which their crucifixes, miraculous medals, and jewelled poniards were attached, amply proved that on the march they could help themselves to occasional trinkets as freely as their soldiers and camp-followers.

Many of them were noble in feature and in bearing; but recklessness, defiance, debauchery, and crime were stamped heavily and ineffaceably on every brow, and in the lack-lustre expression of every drunken eye. Those who sat by the large table were absorbed in the chances of several games (post-and-pair, tric-trac, and ombre); their minds were wholly occupied, and they were watching the turns of fortune, with their bleared and blood-shot eyes fixed on those pieces of painted pasteboard, which had already cost one of their number his life; for on the floor there lay a cavalier, whose right hand yet grasped an unsheathed rapier. Gabrielle thought him intoxicated, but a cry almost escaped her on perceiving that he was ghastly, stiff, and dead; that his unclosed eyes were turned back within their sockets, and his long fair hair was clotted by blood. Near him sat the slayer in his shirt sleeves, binding up a thrust which he had recently received in the sword arm, and whistling the while with a grim expression on his sunburnt visage. It was evident that a brawl had interrupted the gambling—that one of their number had been slain; but so intent were the Merodeurs on their favourite amusement, that they had quietly resumed their play without even removing the corpse—a terrible illustration of their reckless ferocity and familiarity with outrage.

In the dark shadow which obscured the lower end of the hall Gabrielle passed unnoticed, and her light step was unheard. From thence the halberdier conducted her along several passages, and then stopped before a door, over which swung a lamp.

"In *that* chamber you will find the count," said he, pointing to the door.

"My father—my father!" said Gabrielle, in a soft and almost breathless voice; "at last—at last—oh my father!" she sprung forward, and, opening the door, entered the room—not, as she expected, to throw herself by the sick couch of her father, and to embrace him with all the gush of filial tenderness that welled up in her pure and joyous heart, but to find herself folded with ardour to the breast of a stranger.

"Oh, horror!" she murmured, as the light left her eyes, for she was in the arms of the terrible Ulrick, Count of Merodé!

CHAPTER LV.

PROVING THE MAXIM, THAT ADVANTAGE MAY BE TAKEN IN
LOVE AS WELL AS IN WAR.

It was some time before Gabrielle recovered from her astonishment and grief, or could fully realise all the terrors of her situation.

Merodé seated her in a chair, and closed the door. The apartment was very handsome, being completely hung with red Danish cloth, stamped over with rich silver flowers. A fire burned in an iron basket in the chimney, which was lined with gaudy Delft ware. In one corner stood a small bed, covered with green silk, brocaded with gold, and surmounted by plumes. The count's magnificently embossed helmet and cuirass hung on the knobs of one chair; his buff-coat, pistols, and rapier lay on another; and now, while the terrified Gabrielle is recovering her faculties, and surveying all these things by the light of a beautiful girandole, which occupied the centre of a small tripod table, let us take a view of the famous Ulrick.

He was about thirty-five years of age, above the middle height, and strongly made; handsome enough in face and figure to please any woman, but in his dark and devilish eye there was an expression which, while it fascinated with the fascination of fear, had that *gloating* expression, which the eye of an honest or honourable man never possesses.

His doublet of sky-blue velvet was completely covered with silver embroidery; his lace collar was a little awry, and stained with wine; his hair and moustaches were untrimmed, for he had just been awakened out of a sleep into which he had smok-

himself two hours before, and his tasselled pipe still hung at a buttonhole of his doublet—the same honoured buttonhole at which he had suspended the diamond star of St. George of Carinthia. His cloak and breeches were also of sky-blue velvet laced with silver; he wore white buff-boots and silver spurs; a white buff-belt and diamond-hilted siletto; a white satin scarf, with a cross and eagle embroidered at the ends of it. Having slept off his first drunken nap, there was a jaunty devil-may-care expression in his face, and he regarded the young girl with a smile full of desire and admiration.

"Count of Merodé," said she, abruptly; "is not my father with you here in Fredricksort?"

"No, Madame Gabrielle (you see I have not forgotten that name, nor the magic it once had for me), he is not. Thank Heaven! I am my own commanding-officer—at least none can have authority over me save your charming self; and I will consider it the duty and the glory of my life to obey you—to be your servant—your slave—your—"

As Merodé had all this kind of stuff off by rote, and by frequent repetition could have poured forth speeches which would fill three folio pages, Gabrielle cut him short by saying—

"I beseech you, sir, to tell me where my father is."

"I believe the old gentleman is with the Emperor at Vienna, where I hope they are both enjoying good health."

"Vienna! Impossible!"

"By the immortal Jove I swear to you that he is, unless—as report says—he is banished to his own castle of Giezar; for Ferdinand did not like the management of that piece of work at Oldenburg, and the escape of the count in the same ship with Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, whom he has sworn to hang (Duke and Elector though he be) over the gate of the Five Vowels at Vienna."*

"Ah, mercy! what will become of me? Oh, Ernestine, Ernestine! where are you? why are we separated? why am I here?"

"'Pon my soul, little one, by all this noise I could imagine that, like the old fellow Daniel, you had fallen into a den of lions, or among outrageous wolves, instead of a few lively young men, who can appreciate so well a pretty face. Adorable Gabrielle! I have never—never since we last saw each other at Vienna—had an opportunity of saying how much your beauty has taken possession of my whole thoughts. If I am stupid or timid just now, I pray attribute it to your presence here, which overwhelms me."

* A gate of the palace, then inscribed A. E. I. O. U., meaning *Ausdein et imperare orbis universo*; i.e., "Austria is to govern the world."

"Timidity! I should think, my lord, you have very little of that, who have dared to entrap a daughter of Count Carlstein."

"Dared! Der Teufel! 'tis a word rarely addressed to a *Merodista*. (At that frightful word Gabriel shuddered.) In love, as in war, we take all advantages; but, poor innocent! how can you be able to judge of a passion to which you must be a stranger? Yet, be assured you will find love a more pleasant study than I found Latin at college; and, dearest Gabrielle, if I might be your preceptor——"

He placed both his hands on the fine figure of Gabrielle, and endeavoured to clasp her slender waist. The moment he touched her person, she drew herself up with loftiness and hauteur; her eye flashed and her cheek reddened, while a haughty indignation, which startled even Merodé, beamed on her beautiful brow.

"Der Teufel! but you *are* enchanting!" said Merodé, stepping back apace, and surveying her with all the air of a profound connoisseur. "'Pon my soul, little one, I like you all the better for this display of temper; you shall see how friendly we shall be by-and-by. Believe me, I have not the least feeling of revenge for all the contempt with which you treated me at Vienna—not the least. Ah! by my life, what a charming pout!"

"I will leave this place, and go to my sister. Oh! Ernestine, where are you, and why are you not here to protect me?"

"She is in very good keeping by this time; and 'tis well, for she is a little bit of an Amazon," said Merodé, somewhat maliciously: for he knew right well that she was to become the prey of Bandolo.

"Count," said Gabrielle, clasping her poor little hands, and approaching with a trembling heart and imploring eyes; "by all the mercies of Heaven, I conjure you to tell me what you mean!"

"Delicious Gabrielle!" murmured the count, looking at her from side to side, as one would do a fine horse; "why, I merely mean that she is safe among the Lutheran nuns of St. Knud, at Kiel, where some of my fellows are very anxious to pay a visit."

"On your honour, count, you assure me of this?"

"On my soul I do!" replied Merodé, for *that* he considered of infinitely less importance.

Though thankful for the imaginary safety of her sister, Gabrielle, being overcome by the desolation and dangers of her position, sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands. Without touching her, Merodé hung over the chair, and gazed at the beautiful and harmonious outline of her young bust and curved shoulder; and thought that, although there was every chance of old Carlstein putting a bullet through his head, *sans* parley or ceremony, on the first opportunity, the pleasure he now experienced was well worth the risk to be run.

"Why so very sad?" said he, after a pause; "I don't comprehend it. Really, I must have a rival, and that is the most troublesome animal a lover can have in his way. Now, pretty one, say—have I?"

"You have none here, at all events," sobbed Gabriel, a little spitefully.

"Then I can have none anywhere else," replied the count, twirling his enormous Austrian moustache. "You charm me more and more! and has no man ever said that he loved you?"

Ian's stately figure seemed to rise at these words, and as the young maiden thought of her modest, her hopeless, and secret love, she could only weep.

Merodé uttered a deep sigh, which had its origin in art, rather than purity of passion; for that was a purity which the heart of Merodé never knew.

"Ah, Gabrielle! you do look seducing at this moment! Those dear white hands—and beautiful tears," he resumed, attempting to place an arm round her.

"For the love of Heaven, Count Merodé, do not touch me!" implored Gabrielle, in a voice so tender that he withdrew his arm, and stammered out—

"Der Teufel! Faith, I always thought that girls preferred a brisk and toying lover to a man who made long faces and long speeches. To-night I see that nothing can be achieved—not even the smallest caress. To-morrow we shall be better friends. 'Tis always thus with little ones like you. They make a devil of a fuss at first; and, from hating me alone, I have known twenty girls come at last to love the whole regiment, from right flank to left—positively! Pray, do not get into a passion with a poor Pickle like me, who fires off whatever ammunition comes first to hand; and so now I will leave you, and go to supper with my *bon camarados* in the hall. In these matter-of-fact days, my pretty one, love—however strong—cannot subsist without plenty to eat and drink," continued Merodé, rising and bowing, as he slowly retired towards the door. "We should grow sad if we did not drink; we should die if we did not eat. Now, were I a young damsel, I would always choose a lover who had a good appetite, and loved his can of wine; for he that does so, is sure to be a strong and healthy fellow, with good sense, a good heart, and a good pair of sturdy legs; and what more would the most fastidious lady—even the Lady Margarethe of Skofgaard, or the Empress herself, require? What! you are still angry and perverse; and your father will have me broken alive upon the wheel, will he? No—no—I am sure he could never be such a hard-hearted old crocodile. But, good night, dearest Gabrielle; I will send you a companion—the best of many we have here in

Fredricksort; but until to-morrow I will not trouble you again."

He retired, and closed the door.

For a time Gabrielle remained buried in the most tormenting thoughts, and shedding a torrent of tears.

Near the elegant couch already described, a door opened softly; not so softly as to be unheard by Gabrielle. She turned, with eyes expressive of alarm, and a lady stood before her.

It was the Señora Prudentia—the Spanish dancer, whom Gabrielle had seen charming thousands in the theatre of Vienna; at whom, of course, she did not recognise in her Spanish costume, and with a face so pale—for excesses of many kinds had robbed the fair actress of many of her charms since she had made such a blockhead of me when in garrison at Glückstadt; but still she was beautiful, and her deep, dark, and magnificent eyes were fixed on Gabrielle, with a smile so lively and seducing that she was quite charmed. Rejoiced to see one of her own sex, she sprang towards her, and said—

"Ah, madame! you will protect me, will you not?"

"Protect you from what—from whom? There is no danger here," said Prudentia, kissing the soft white cheek of Gabrielle, who threw herself into her arms. Her pretty foreign accent gave a girlish simplicity to all the señora said.

"Do not leave me, and I shall love you!" exclaimed Gabrielle.

"Upon my honour, child, you are beautiful!" said the dancer who was her senior by a year or two), holding Gabrielle at arm's length, and surveying her timid face and fine figure;—"you are perfectly beautiful!"

"And so are you," said the poor little captive, with the most perfect innocence; "but you will be kind to me, will you not? Oh, yes!—for you have eyes just like my dear sister. And you will set me free?"

"Free—for what?" laughed the dancer; "is not one much better here?"

"In this frightful place! Are you the wife of Count Merodé? hope you are not—I should be so sorry if one so pretty——"

"No; I am called the Señora Prudentia," replied the dancer, with a loud laugh.

"Prudentia!" said Gabrielle, musing; "I have surely heard that name before. There was a dancer so called in Vienna—a paniard. Six months ago there was a brawl in her house, and an officer of Camargo's regiment was murdered. The woman had to fly."

"I have heard of it," replied Prudentia, who was the identical personage referred to, and had then around her graceful neck and open wrists the jewels given to her by the murdered man, w

had fallen beneath her brother's poniard—a catastrophe which had banished her from Vienna for ever, though it was no blemish in the eyes of Merodé and his officers, to the female staff of whose regiment she had attached herself. “She was a countrywoman of mine—but a mere dancer,” said Prudentia, with a toss of her pretty head; “we know that persons of that profession are all alike.”

“It was very horrid—it was infamous!”

Prudentia gave the unconscious girl a spiteful glance from the corners of her dark eyes.

“Ah! madame, when shall I leave this place—when will you set me free?”

“Foolish child! it is for your own good you are brought here. The count is gallant, rich, generous, and will make up for the fortune your father is about to lose; for, although no one has been found murdered in *his* bedroom, he has fallen into disgrace with the Emperor. I am sure Merodé is very lovable. He will give you the most magnificent dresses—with flowers and diamonds for your hair, jewels and circlets for your neck and arms, a gilded calèche and six white horses with switching tails, if you wish them, for in this place he has half the spoil of South Juteland.”

“Oh, that I was out of it!” said Gabrielle, wringing her hands in bewilderment, and abandoning herself to the most violent grief. “Ernestine! Ernestine! why do you not come to me? I shall be destroyed here. Madame, my father will give you all you have enumerated, and a thousand doubloons to boot, if you will set me free.”

“I am not mistress here, any more than yourself,” replied Prudentia, with a cold smile.

There was a pause, during which nothing was heard but the sobs of Gabrielle and distant din of roistering in the hall, where Merodé and his officers were drinking and gambling like mad ruffians, as they were; and the roar of mingled laughter, with the clatter of drinking-horns, came on the currents of air through the long echoing corridors of the old Danish fortress.

“Oh!” moaned Gabrielle, covering her fine blue eyes with her hands; “I wish that some great illness would come and kill me.”

“What a foolish wish,” retorted Prudentia; “upon my word, girl, I believe you are just what I was at your age—dying for a husband. But come with me to my room; by this time, Merodé, who, with all his generosity, is a mere sot at night—a regular *borrachó*—will not trouble us until to-morrow—”

“But his comrades?”

“They dare not cast even an insolent glance upon the lady.”

friends of their commander—so come with me, and rest assured that, until morning at least, you are safe.”

This was the truth. Gabrielle declined all refreshment, though offered every delicacy by Prudentia. She was permitted to pass that night unmolested; and, though she could not by any means be prevailed upon to undress, shared the sleeping-place of one, from whose touch—had she known all—she would have shrunk as from contamination.

The Spanish *danzador* went through the ceremony (a somewhat useless one for her), of telling her beads before retiring to repose; but Gabrielle, who knelt by her side, clasped her little white hands, and, from her pure and virgin heart, addressed to Heaven one of those deep and voiceless prayers, which are all the more deep and fervent because the lips cannot utter them.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE WHITE POWDER.

WHILE these little matters were occurring at his Danish majesty's castle of Fredricksort, Ernestine was still at the sequestered cottage in the wood; the old hag was yet skinning her squirrels in a corner of the chimney; the oil lamp was yet shedding its sickly gleam on the pale face of Ernestine, on the coal-black hair, the rattlesnake eyes; and ferocious mouth of Bandolo, who had imbibed many a draught of schnaps, slightly tintured with water. He was still awed by the presence of her he had dared to decoy by an artful story; thus his love affair had not made much progress.

Had Gabrielle fallen into the hands of Bandolo, she had been inevitably lost; for the extreme buoyancy and girlishness of her nature would have been totally overcome by terror. But Ernestine, with all her sweetness, retained that majestic calmness and admirable self-possession which dazzled and confounded this man of a hundred crimes. She awed him by her placid dignity—even as still waters awe us by their depth, more than the turbulent and shallow. Yet in her inmost heart Ernestine deplored with voiceless bitterness her irreparable folly, in committing herself without my advice to the guidance of a perfect stranger; though that stranger had presented himself at Falster as the count's accredited messenger. But now the danger which she was certain must beset Gabrielle, gave her desperate courage.

"Heaven—blessed Heaven!" said she, clasping her hands and raising her fine eyes; "hast Thou abandoned me?"

"Por el Santo nombre de Dios!" cried the Spaniard, with a hoarse laugh; "what the d—! do you think that Heaven cares about all your little piques and perversities. Heaven would indeed have plenty to do if it attended to all the nonsense of women. Have done with ha's and oh's, and listen to me. I remember a time when I was ass enough to starve and scourge myself in the forty days of Lent, to make up for my enormities during the Neapolitan carnival—but, faith! I am wiser now, and St. Mary——"

"Wretch, name her not!"

"Well, if I am such a rascal that your precious saints will not interest themselves in my affairs, I must just have recourse to the schnaps in the first place, and the devil in the second—ha! ha! What a hen-hearted fellow I am to sit here all night without having one kiss from you! Trumpery! I am turning a cowardly blunderbuss, like Bernhard; and now, when I think of it, I wonder why that schwindler tarries with my thousand ducats. Lady," continued this ogre, with a ghastly leer; "I am rich. In this mail are bills on the Imperial treasury, and gold to the value of a hundred thousand dollars—the fruits of many years of valour and industry."

"Murder and espionage."

"Call it what you will—call it what you will! With that sum I can purchase a county, either in Germany or Naples, and thou shalt share that county with me."

Ernestine almost uttered a scornful laugh.

"'Twill be a glorious revenge upon that haughty noble, who, when caprioling through the streets of Vienna with all his waving feathers and plates of polished steel, rode over me near the palace gate, and passed on without pity, because I was Bandolo—'twill be a glorious vengeance, I say, when this man, Rupert Count of Carlstein, Lord of Giezar and Kœningratz, has to greet me as his son-in-law—ha! ha!" He attempted to take in his the hand of Ernestine.

"For the sake of Heaven, do not sully me by your touch!"

"Beware, lest by haughty words and scornful glances you turn my softness to anger; my love to hatred; my persuasions to that violence which I may put in force when I choose; and thus, in grim earnest, sully the illustrious blood of Carlstein—ha! ha! Sully, I think, was the term you used, lady—as if the blood in one body was better, or purer, or more divine, than the blood in another."

Full of scorn and fear, Ernestine gazed at him as she would have gazed at a serpent. Anger and horror alternately rendered

ner silent and motionless. At times she could scarcely believe that all she saw and heard was real—that she was so completely in the power of this man, the touch of whose hand—that hand so often dipped in human blood—struck a chill through her. Was he really awake? Was it not all a hideous dream, from which he would awake to find herself by her sister's side, in their little red-chamber at Nyekiöbing?

"Mercy on me!" she thought, wildly; "to what a fate am I exposed! Here, without a hope, without a chance of escape, but by death—and not even by that, for I am without a poniard. Oh, wretch! would that I could find one, either for myself or for thee!"

Bandolo, who sat on the top of his precious mail, which he had placed upon a stool, swung his legs to and fro, laughed boisterously as the schnaps mounted to his brain; for she had uttered the last wish aloud.

"Bandolo—man—monster! what wrong have I ever done you, that you should persecute me thus?"

"You have not done anything, but your father has. He rode me down in the streets of Vienna; and the man you love has, for he defeated and disgraced me at Glückstadt. He has stabbed and discovered me in various disguises; and, by robbing him of *you*, I rob him of that which he prizes more than his miserable life, which I could have taken by a pistol-shot at any time—ha! ha! So do not talk in that way again, my bride, or, zounds! I will come and kiss you."

Terrified by this threat, Ernestine remained silent for a time.

He uttered a succession of savage chuckles; then whistled a bolero, and resumed his swinging to and fro on the stool and his beloved portmanteau, eyeing his prisoner all the time as a cat does a mouse.

"Bandolo—Herr or Señor—for I know not by which to address you," said Ernestine; "you are said to love gold as a fish loves water, or flowers the sun."

"As flowers love water, or a fish the sun—what a fine simile! ha! ha!" said Bandolo, who was rapidly becoming tipsy; "Well—what if I do?"

"Conduct me to the nearest Austrian garrison, and I will see that you are paid a thousand ducats in gold."

"Bah!" said he; "I have just sold your sister for that very sum."

"My sister—my sister!" reiterated Ernestine, in a breathless voice—"to whom?"

"The virtuous and honourable Count of Merodé."

At this cruel reply, the heart of Ernestine ceased to beat, and a palsy seemed to shake her beautiful form. A glazed ex-
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stole over the ferocious eyes of Bandolo; they seemed to roll on vacancy, and the terror of Ernestine was redoubled.

"Gold—yes, gold!" he muttered; "when gold is spread before me, when a reward is in my hand, I am mad! I am no longer myself! Something like a red curtain descends between me and the sun, bathing in redness all before my eyes. A hand passes over my heart—there is a whisper in my ears; it is *destroy—destroy and be rich!* Then I can see nothing before me, above me, and below me, but blood—red blood in pouring torrents, but spotted with sparkling stars; these stars are coins—they are gold—yellow gold—they are the price of my soul! Every deed I have done—every deed I am yet to do—even the murder of thee, perhaps, all beautiful as thou art—was written down ages before I was born, and they were all foretold me by an old gitana of Arragon. Oh, yes! I remember that night in the wood near Almudever. The wind was still, and the red sheet-lightning was reddening the midnight sky behind Huesca and the spire of San Lorenzo. We sat near the margin of the Gallego, and a thousand cork-trees hung their branches over its stupendous torrent, the roar of which shook the earth beneath our feet, yet not even the smallest of their leaves was stirring. I remember yet the solemn stillness of the wood and roaring fury of the torrent, but I heard only the voice of the old gitana; and she foretold how, wading through a sea of crime, I should wed the daughter of a valiant noble, and die rich, powerful, feared, and respected; and the hour is at hand for accomplishing the first part of my destiny—for turning the first leaf in the great book of my fate. I am not drunk—*Maldicion de Dios—no!*" he continued, rolling his head from side to side; "do I speak like a man who is so?"

Ernestine turned anxiously and hopelessly to the old woman; but Dame Krümple had fallen asleep by the dying embers, and lay half reclined against the fireplace, with a knife in one hand, and a half-skinned squirrel in the other; and while Bandolo had run on thus concerning the gitana, her prophecy and his fate, a sickness, the very sickness of intense fear, came over Ernestine. She bent her head upon her hand, but still continued to watch him between her white fingers. Suddenly the wretched cottage seemed to swim around her; and she felt herself sinking.

"Blessed Heaven!" she prayed, "preserve me from the deadly faintness that is coming over me!"

"The bottle of kirschwasser is rather nearer you than heaven," said Bandolo, pouring some of the cherry-wine into the two tin cups which were on the table. Ernestine, who thought it might revive and strengthen her for what she might have yet to encounter, made no objection; but while watching Bandolo be-

tween the pretty white fingers which shaded her eyes, she perceived him hastily shake a little *white powder* into one of the cups! Instead of increasing her terror, this gave her a new and sudden courage, and she immediately conceived a bold and decisive project, for my brave Ernestine had a man's head with all her woman's heart.

She cared not whether the drugged cup contained merely a narcotic or a deadlier draught. In either case she knew that it was meant for her, with some terrible ulterior object—and that the cup was full of peril; hence she resolved that it should be drunk by Bandolo himself.

"Drink with me," said he; "you cannot refuse me that. To our better acquaintance, lady sweetheart—and to your better humour—ha! ha!"

Gathering all her energies, she uttered a shrill cry of alarm, and exclaimed—

"See—see—what is that at the window?"

Dame Krümple sprang to her slipshod feet. Bandolo grasped a pistol, rushed to the lattice, and, pressing his nose against it, peered out into the darkness of the forest, and at that instant Ernestine set down her drugged cup of the kirschwasser, and took up *his*.

"No one is there—por el nombre de Dios, *if there was!*" growled Bandolo, grinding his teeth as he uncocked his pistol, and for a moment became almost sobered; while the beldam in the corner snorted herself asleep again. "Hoity, toity, my poor little Tit—'tis only your perverse fancy! Come, drink with me; this cup of cherry-water will brace your nerves, and set all right in heart and head—it will, by the henckers! (I am half German you see—even as you are half Spaniard); ha! ha! Come, my bride—let us clink our cans and be merry."

With a pale and trembling hand Ernestine raised the cup in the old German fashion, clinked it side by side, above and below, with the drugged cup of the subtle but unconscious bravo, and then drained its contents. He gave her a long stare of triumph and derision; then burst into a loud laugh, and drank off his wine at one gulp.

He then set down the cup, and while continuing to look at Ernestine with a leering expression, broke into a German drinking song which he had heard among Tilly's Reitres, and, mingling with it scraps of a Spanish gipsy ballad, rolled his head from side to side with a wild expression of face, that increased every moment.

The song died away in quavering murmurs on his lips; once or twice he raised his hands, but they fell heavily by his side.

Then it seemed suddenly to flash upon his mind, the facultie

of which were fast obscuring, that he had drunk of the wrong cup; and the smile of bitter triumph that curled the beautiful lip of Ernestine, and the wonder that sparkled in her haughty eyes, convinced him that it was so!

"Ah, traitress—that cry—you have outwitted me! I thought you had swallowed this drug—it now spreads a drowsy numbness over every limb. Traitor—ass that I am—I have fallen into my own trap—I have drugged myself—she will escape! Maldicion—de—de—Maldetto! By the henckers; I will put a ball through you—I will—I will!—"

Erecting himself on his feet, where he swayed to and fro like a figure on a pivot, he endeavoured to grasp Ernestine; but she started back.

At that moment his aspect was frightful.

Inflamed by passion and desire, ferocity and revenge, his features were alternately brightened by a wild leer, or contracted and savage. His eyes were glittering with that white ghastly glare which some Spanish eyes can alone assume; and, balancing himself on each leg alternately, he approached the bold but startled girl, while his hands wandered nervously among the weapons in his belt. Suddenly he fell prostrate, speechless, and almost unable to move; but his glaring eyes—still fixed on Ernestine—showed that, though the drugged kirschwasser had fettered every limb, his senses had not yet left him.

"And this would have been my situation!" thought Ernestine, with a heart full of horror.

Stooping down, she deliberately, but not without a shudder, drew from his belt four pistols and threw away the priming, and took possession of his poniard, which she placed in her girdle—uttering a joyful laugh, for she knew that *her* moment of triumph had come. If Bandolo's eyes could have slain, at that crisis their glare would have immolated her. She was about to rush from the cottage when another thought occurred to her; and grasping the heavy portmanteau, which contained all Bandolo's vast amount of treasury—bills and gold—that gold which the perpetration of a hundred complicated crimes had amassed and enabled him to hoard up, like the very blood of his heart—she shook it tauntingly before his fixed and frenzied eyes, and, rejoicing that she could thus rob the robber, issued from the cottage with the intention of throwing the ponderous mail into the first deep well she came to, that the price of blood might be lost to men for ever.

As she disappeared, a cry almost left the paralysed tongue of Bandolo, on seeing all the fruit of his crimes and avarice vanishing into smoke, together with the prophecies of the gitana and his hopes of a count's coronet; and as he sank lower and lower

upon the clay floor, and the power of a narcotic that was to last for six-and-thirty hours spread over him, the tramp of a horse's hoofs receding into the distant paths of the wood were the last sounds he heard, and they informed him that his beautiful prisoner and his beloved gold were gone together.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE NUNS OF ST. KNUD.

NOTWITHSTANDING the wildness of her terror, Ernestine, who was a bold and expert horsewoman, retained sufficient presence of mind to select her own nag, to give a glance at the saddle, and before mounting to throw the mail with its contents into the deep tarn that lay before the cottage door. Relieved of this encumbrance, and feeling that she had revenged herself, she dashed at full speed along the same path by which they had come; and though she frequently paused to listen, and cry aloud the name of her sister, in the hope that she might be in her vicinity, the echoes alone replied.

A torrent of tears again came to her relief; her hat flew off, and with all her loosened hair streaming behind her, in such a manner that it frequently became twisted among the branches of the trees, she urged on her horse by the unsparing use of the whip and the bridle-end. All the energy and courage that the presence of immediate danger had summoned, and which had enabled Ernestine to conduct herself so stoutly and so well throughout the trying events of the evening and night, were now passing away, and she could only weep and murmur the name of her sister.

She had left the wood far behind her, and was now in the open country, where all was still and solemn; and, as she had long since committed the bridle to the care of her horse, on recovering sufficiently she found that he had slackened his pace, and commenced cropping the long grass that grew by the wayside.

She looked around and began to reflect on the many terrors and peculiarities of her situation.

The moon was waning, and its pale white disc was slowly sinking behind the flat shore of Eckernfiörd, and the long shadows of every tree and hedge were thrown far across the fallow and neglected fields. All was quiet and voiceless as a vast burial-ground. There was no house near. Without money, jewels, or friends, she was alone in a land where the rough, morose, and uncultivated boors were jealous of all strangers, and unmerciful.

to the straggling Imperialists, whom they slew without mercy wherever they met them. Her mind became filled with new alarms, and the poor girl knew not which way to turn for succour or for protection.

Bandolo had spoken of having sold her sister to Merodé, who occupied Fredricksort. She shuddered at the idea of Merodé and his officers, but her first thought was to seek that fortress; then she paused. Should her sister really be there, she could only hope to achieve her freedom by being herself free. To visit Fredericksort might be to become also a prisoner; besides, had as Merodé was, Gabrielle might be safer with him than she could have been with Bandolo. Where now were all their father's rank and power, when the debauched Merodé, and Tilly's ruffian follower, dared to commit the acts they had done? Her mind became a prey to the most bitter anguish. Then came other ideas; for as the white moon disappeared, and inky blackness stole over the darkened sea and level landscape, her German education brought many a strange and wild story to her memory, and made her tremble, as she watched the quaint, fantastic shapes assumed by every object between her and the distant horizon, where, rising from a black and strongly-defined outline, there shone a pallid flush of light, but silvery and uncertain, the last rays of the moon that had waned; and she was weak enough to fear that a swarm of little Trolchs might surround her; for, unlike the beautiful and merry little fairies of our Scottish traditions, those of Denmark are impish, heavy, and ungainly gnomes, with hump-backs and long hook-noses, wearing grey doublets and conical red caps; but, as the land was moorish and level, she feared still more to meet with some of the *Elle people*, who are usually said to dwell in such places, and whose touch causes a wasting that ends in death.

While these thoughts crowded through her mind, and mingled with her more solid causes of grief and terror, she suddenly found herself beneath the walls of a high square building, surrounded by a number of copper beeches and tall poplars.

Not without some fear that it might prove the castle of Grön Jette, or King Waldemar the wild huntsman, and consequently that it might vanish at her touch, she approached the arched gateway and raised the knocker, which was of good substantial iron, and rang heavily. She knocked repeatedly without receiving any answer, and her heart beat with increased rapidity. After a time she heard the sound of voices within, and thanked Heaven to find them all belonging to females. One named Grethe was frequently summoned.

"Grethe! Grethe!—where are you, Grethe?"

Grethe, who proved to be the old portress of this edifice, which

former times had been a Catholic convent, dedicated to St. Knud, but was now an establishment of Lutheran nuns, opened the gate, and uttered a cry on beholding the pale face, the long black hair, the wild and disordered expression of Ernestine.

"An Elle woman!" she exclaimed; "an Elle woman from the moor!"

Half sinking with emotion and fatigue, Ernestine slipped from her saddle, and entered among the nuns, who received her with wonder and fear, but with kindness, on finding that she was a mortal like themselves, and neither an Elle woman nor one of the *Stille Volk* (the silent people), spirits who appear to give warning of approaching danger.

The kind Danish ladies (whose superior was a daughter of the old Baron Føye) conveyed Ernestine into the parlour of the establishment, where they had all been assembling previous to morning prayers. Refreshments were brought, and her story heard. Notwithstanding that she was a daughter of one of those imperialists who were carrying war and desolation to the heart of Denmark, she was treated with the most sisterly kindness.

The lady superior left nothing undone or unsaid to reassure Ernestine, and promised that with dawn every means should be taken to trace her sister. The Lutheran nuns did not conceal their satisfaction at having within their walls a daughter of the great Imperialist, Count Carlstein, colonel-general of the cavalry, fully believing that her presence would protect them from any of the unscrupulous Merodeurs, who occupied the castle of Fredericksort, a few miles distant.

These kind sisters did all in their power to comfort Ernestine; but everything in their establishment excited her surprise, being so different from the Catholic convents of the empire. Instead of the long flowing robe, the wimple, veil, and hood, they wore the dress of the world, and had ample fardingales, with starched collars and bands, puffs, cuffs, ruffs, and all the newest fashions of France.

Ernestine expressed her astonishment at this, and said she would not believe them to be nuns in sober earnest.

"Why so, child?" retorted the Lady Føye; "is it because we dress like other women of the present day, and do not make our piety to consist in the modish garments of a bygone age, like the religious of your empire?"

"I crave your pardon, mother," said Ernestine, gently; "but it seems so strange to me—and your vows——"

"Vow me no vows!" replied the lady; "we are all daughters of the best families in Denmark, and only remain here so long as we please, consequently we do not require vows to restrain our inclinations to evil."

Ernestine had no wish to offend the kind superior by instituting comparisons between her establishment and those which she considered more perfect, and consequently remained silent.

She was three days with the nuns of St. Knud. As it was the rule of these Lutheran establishments that the sisters should sleep by pairs, Ernestine slept with one of them. Each couple had their little dormitory and working-room, where they made clothes for the poor, drew landscapes and pious pictures without number, representing the miracles of St. Knud, and the spiders spinning their webs over that hole in which he concealed himself from the Wends, who, deceived by the appearance of the gossamer web, believed there was no one within, and prosecuted their search elsewhere; others painted on velvet, or made flowers and ornaments for sale; in short, nothing could be more blameless and amiable than the tenor of their way.

They had a chapel, having a crucifix, altar, and candles, where the village curate gave them a sermon twice every week; though the crucifix and other *et cetera* are at variance with the catechism of Martin Luther, as printed at Kiøbenhavn in 1666.

The nun who shared her bed and apartment with Ernestine was a very pretty and fair-haired girl, the youngest daughter of the old Count of Rantzau. Sister Gunhilda informed her, in that solemn confidence which the circumstance of being bed-fellows establishes at once between young girls, that she was only residing in this tiresome convent until the close of the weary war would permit the Baron Karl of Klosterfiørd to leave his troop of pistoliers for a few months and marry her; and no sooner did she ascertain that Ernestine had once seen her dear Karl, than she overwhelmed her with questions as to what he said and did: and whether his air was not noble, his voice the most pleasant, his mustaches the most captivating, and his figure the most handsome, she had ever met with.

To find nuns so impatient for marriage, and speaking of it quite as an occurrence of their every-day life, was a fresh source of wonder to poor Ernestine.

During the three days she was with them, no tidings could be learned of Gabrielle; for as the sentinels of Merodé at Fredricksort invariably shot every Dane who approached their posts, the boors were too wary to trust themselves within a mile of the Imperial quarters.

Another day would have found her despairing and inconsolable, had not an unexpected visitor arrived at the convent. This was no other than Father d'Eydel (or Daidle, which you please), the Jesuit, who had just made his escape from the uproar and carnage of Eckernfiørd, where he had been with the Imperial garrison, the story of whose destruction he related.

Ernestine received him almost with joy, and wept upon his

and; the Lutheran abbess and her ladies received him with hospitality and respect, though the good man certainly cut a very remarkable figure for a follower of St. Ignatius Loyola. He had escaped from Eckernförd just as he had sprung out of bed, i. e., in his shirt and drawers; and he had picked up and donned a drummer's doublet, which was covered with tawdry lace, and was too small for him. Thus his long and bony arms protruded far through the sleeves, while the short tails were dangling high up between his shoulders; and on his head was a broad plaited straw hat, such as the peasant women wore; and these garments, when his severely solemn face, and long lean figure, thrust into a pair of tight flannel drawers, are taken into account, made him much more comical than reverend in aspect. Even his own brother, the dominie, would not have recognised him. He had no sooner consoled Ernestine (who was his favourite), and recovered from his fatigue and general discomposure, than, without doffing the drummer's yellow doublet, with its tags of scarlet lace, he turned his grave grey eyes upon the Lady Foyce, and asked her if she was not ashamed of the frippery exhibited by the ladies of her establishment.

"I ask you, madame—for reverend mother I cannot call you—if all this pinning and unpinning, combing and brushing, and other looking-glass work—this ado with corsets and carcanets, rucks and boddices, bracelets and borders—these partlets and riglets, kirtles and fardingales—this concatenation of trumpery and trash, are becoming women who retire from the world as sisters of St. Knud? Alas! it was neither velvet nor satin, purple nor fine linen, that were worn in better times by the true sisters of that blessed saint, who gathered the rich harvest of conversion among the Danish isles, in those dark ages when, at the sound of his inspired voice, the vanities and atrocities of the Eleusynian rites fled and disappeared—when the fires of superstition were quenched, and the blood of the human sacrifice was dried on the stone of Odin, never to stain it more. Their garments were of sackcloth, their hoods and wimples the fruits of their own industry. But you, madame, and these around you—oh, get you gone! for all this frippery is enough to bring the vengeance of Heaven, if it does not bring the Merodeurs among you!"

He said a great deal more to the same purpose, and wound up his discourse by almost convincing the poor harmless women that they were thoroughly disreputable, and a mere society of sinners; but in the midst of his harangue Gunhilda of Rantzau whispered to Ernestine that she was now convinced the convent was not a proper place for her, and more than ever wished that her dear Karl would come and take her away.

On questioning the Jesuit concerning the troops who had mar-

the midnight attack on Eckernförde, he happened to mention to Ernestine our regiment of Strathnaver, having seen the tartans waving, and heard the pipes braying, as we defiled in close column through the main street to assail the great church. Filled by new fears and anxieties, Ernestine determined to seek the battalion, and discover me, if I had not fallen in the night attack, "which," as Father d'Eydel said, "was not improbable, for I saw the poor Scottish lads lying across each other on the causeway, like fish in a net."

Her new terrors were irrepressible. With daybreak she set out on horseback, riding on a pillion behind the priest, who was disguised as a layman, in a dress given to him by the lady Frøye, who received in return a protection for all her establishment, written in strong terms, and running in the name of Count Tilly.

An hour's riding brought him and Ernestine to Eckernförde, where everything bore terrible witness of the recent conflict: the burned and ruined houses; the church razed to its foundations; the streets strewn with wounded, with killed, and spotted by gouts of blood; with spent cannon-shot and exploded bombs while the blackened wrecks of the storeship lay half burned and stranded on the sandy shore. Others had gone down at the anchors when the flames had reached the water-edge. Thus the harbour, which yesterday had presented a fair and busy scene, was now desolate and empty, or covered with scorched timber and floating corpses.

It happened luckily that Angus Roy M'Alpine, with his company, guarded the gate which faces the road from Kiel; and he sent a Highland soldier to conduct Ernestine and the Jesuit to a house where I and several others had been carried, for the purpose of being examined by the surgeon to the forces—the famous Dr. Alexander Pennicuik of that ilk, who afterwards was surgeon-general to Sir John Banier in Germany.

I need not expatiate on the emotions of poor Ernestine, when she beheld me lying in a stupor of pain and exhaustion, on a little straw spread on the floor of this temporary hospital, with a plaid rolled up and placed under my head for a pillow, and a dead soldier on each side of me; for many a poor fellow expired of agony or loss of blood before their wounds could be attended to, in the bustle and excitement succeeding the desperate business of the night attack.

CHAPTER LVIII.

COMFORTS OF WAR.

TRUCK senseless by a piece of falling timber, as I have related, lay in a state of blessed unconsciousness of the horrors and of the carnage around me; but I can still remember the gradual ruggling back to life again, and a partial relapse into insensibility—a vibrating of the pendulum, as it were, between life and sanity, while many a strange vision floated around me.

My home came before me, and the pleasant voices of other days were in my ears, mingling with the hum of bees and the rustling leaves of my native forests. I wept with joy to find my feet again on the purple heather—again on Scottish earth; but that joy was tinged with fear and doubt, lest the vision would pass away; for the distant and the present—the past and the future—were conflicting for place and coherence in my mind. I beheld my own home, and the roof beneath which my mother bore me into this world of sorrow; the morning sun seemed to redden the walls of the old grey tower, that rose above the woods of Scottish pine; its dun smoke was curling in the pure air of the mountains. Then methought I was at sea in a small shallop, and I felt the waters heaving beneath me. The Sutors of Cromartie, whose ried fronts of rock—the home of the seabird—guard the *Portus alutis* of the ancients, rose before me, with their bases wreathed in surf; mists came around me; the shore receded, and I felt myself alone on the ocean. Farther and farther the boat went seaward, and the shore diminished to a speck. I was feeble and unable to use hand or voice, and I felt that the moment was approaching when I would perish, and the waters close over me.

Then the current of the tide seemed to turn again; the boat was wafted slowly towards the shore; emotions of joy and pain rose within me; old voices came to my ear, and among them were the soft tones of Ernestine. I strove to speak, but my tongue was feeble and fettered; and I tried vainly to embrace her through the mist that enveloped us.

Her voice became more distinct—the shore was very close then; the visionary boat grounded; I felt her hands upon me, and I woke from a stupor, to find myself in the military hospital of Ackernfiörd, with Ernestine kneeling beside me, pale as death—pale as the dead soldiers near us; but bathing my temples with some cool and aromatic essence.

Now, I have no doubt that the imaginary shore from which seemed to recede, and again approached, was this world; and

that in reality my spirit hovered between time and eternity; for, as Doctor Pennicuik informed me afterwards, the contusion on my head, notwithstanding my bonnet of steel, was a very severe one, being upon the very place where I was struck before.

The dead, half stripped, with eyes unclosed and glazed, and with their coagulated blood forming black pools among the straw on which they lay, were stretched at intervals between the wounded and dying. One of the former was a muscular Highlander from the braes of Lochaber, whose breast was gored by three pike-wounds; another, close by me also, was a handsome young chevalier of Montgomerie's French musketeers, whose head had been partially fractured by a spirole shot, and his brains were actually oozing over his eyes.

Father d'Eydel had taken off his masquerading doublet, tucked up his shirt-sleeves, and like a thoroughly good, but somewhat long-legged and long-armed Samaritan, was dressing wounds and bruises, tying up cuts and slashes, distributing food, refreshments, clean shirts, and dry straw, with a celerity that made old Pennicuik of that ilk, our chirurgien-general, declare him well worth a dozen of doctors.

A bed being found for me in an adjacent house, Ian and Phadrig Mhor took me up between them, as if I had been a child, and conveyed me there. Being anxious to have some conversation with Ernestine, I would not permit them to undress me, but lay on the mattress in my doublet and kilt, with a plaid spread over me; and after kind old Sandy Pennicuik (afterwards chief *Medico* to the Scottish army which invaded England) had dressed my wound, the dear girl was permitted to visit me for a half-hour, during which she gave me a brief sketch of her adventures; but, to avoid agitating me unnecessarily, concealed for the present the mystery which involved the fate of Gabrielle.

The half-hour during which we were permitted to be alone, passed like a minute; and yet the excitement of it nearly put me into a fever. In fact, Pennicuik fully expected that it would do so; but believed, as he afterwards said, that if the interview was withheld, a fever from vexation might prove more fatal. We embraced each other repeatedly, with that full and impassioned tenderness which the dangers we had both encountered and escaped, and the separation we had endured, made more endearing to us than ever.

For a time we could do nothing but sigh and utter tender appellations, which would seem very droll even to lovers transferred to paper; although, moreover, none but lovers could understand them.

"Ah! these wars are frightful!" said poor Ernestine, when she had related all her escapes, and heard all mine. "On one

de, I tremble for the loss of my father; on the other, for the loss of you."

"But weep no more, Ernestine; a happy time is in store for all."

"For such scenes as these—for this town with its shattered walls and corpse-strewn streets—you have left those quiet glens and silent hills, of which I have heard my poor father often speak with so much rapture and regret."

"Ay, Ernestine," said I; "but on those blue hills, where the mountain bee sucks the honey from the purple heath, and the white butterfly floats over the yellow broom bells; and in those green glens, where the hirsels graze and the sheep bleat by the himpling burn, or the smoke of the sequestered cottage ascends through the summer woods—the din of war is often heard, and the gleads and corbies are summoned to a feast from the four winds of heaven. The cross of fire gleams across the country, rung from hand to hand; the war-pipe rings from the echoing rock; the beacon blazes on the muster-place, and the clink of arms with the fierce slogan rise among the lonely hills; tribes pour forth against tribe, with banners waving and pibroch sounding; the heather is in flames—the flocks are seized—the valley is strewn with dead—the cottage is sheeted with fire, and the green sod drenched with the blood of the inmates; for the world never saw quarrels more bitter than the hereditary feuds of our Scottish clans; and while the human heart and the human mind are constituted as they now are, there will be wars and crimes, the sack of cities, and the rush of armies; for men are but men, Ernestine, all the world over."

Three days we remained at Eckernförd, burying the dead, collecting provisions, curing the wounded, or embarking them for Zealand. Thanks to the skill of Dr. Pennicuik, and the tender attentions of Ernestine, I was able to attend parade on the evening of the fourth day; but I was so ghastly and pale, that one would have imagined all the experiments of the college physicians had been tried upon me.

So M'Alpine told me, on seeing me almost staggering at the head of my company, and added, "On my honour, Rollo, I did not expect to see you again after hearing that you were wounded; or I thought our Danish doctors would soon do the rest."

"They are much obliged to you for your high opinion of their skill, Angus," said I; "but I have been under the hands, not of Copenhageners, but a barber-chirurgion, regularly graduated at King James' College, in the good town of Edinburgh—hence my rapid recovery, perhaps."

Ernestine had by this time informed me of the manner in which she believed Gabrielle had been betrayed into the hands

of Merodé; and that she was only some ten or twelve miles distant from us, at Fredricksort on the gulf of Kiel. I would have given the world—had the world been mine—to have been permitted to march a wing of our stout Highland blades to overhaul Merodé in his quarters; but King Christian, who occupied the house of the Herredsfoged of Wohlder, had other objects in view; and the result of various councils of war which he, Ian, Count Montgomerie, the Baron Karl, and others, held there, soon became developed.

I may mention that a party under Phadrig Mhor was despatched to the cottage in the wood; but neither Bandolo nor Dame Krümpel were found there. After burning it to the ground, they fished the tarn for the portmanteau, which I told them might be kept by the finders; and Gillian M'Bane, who when at home had been an expert pearl-fisher, after diving down once or twice, discovered its locality; the spoil was soon hooked out, and generously distributed by him fairly and equally among the privates of the regiment. It came to a handsome sum per man, and many of our musketeers wore silver buttons and silver-mounted sporrans to the end of their days.

Meanwhile the increasing preparations of the great Albrecht, Count of Wallenstein, who had been created Duke of Friedland, Sagan, Glogau, and Mecklenburg, General of the Baltic and Oceanic Seas, compelled Christian IV. to exert himself without delay.

Entering fully into the ambitious views of his master, the Emperor, who, in making him Duke of Mecklenburg, had violated the laws and trampled upon the rights of the German confederation, this great and warlike noble resolved to bend his whole energies to destroy the political independence of Germany, exterminate the heresy of Luther, and conquer Scandinavia. We heard that, for this gigantic project, he was rapidly building and equipping a flotilla of ships and gunboats at Rostock, Weimar, and other Hanse towns, which his Spanish fleet had seized.

Lavishing by thousands florins and ducats, the spoil of ravaged kingdoms, on all sides among his reckless favourites and military followers, he led an army a hundred thousand strong across the Elbe, from whence it poured through Saxony and spread along the shores of the Baltic Sea. Terror, extortion, outrage, and contribution, levied by beat of drum, at the sword's point and the cannon's mouth, amassed to Wallenstein in seven years the sum of *sixty thousand millions of dollars!*

Extolling his generosity, his soldiers adored him, while the ruined burghers and rifled boors viewed him with horror and aversion. Thus, amid wealth and rapine, conquest and desolation

splendour, dissipation, and crime, the great army of the Empire flourished, and rolled like a cloud of flame over Germany; while provinces became deserts, and their people perished by famine, by disease, and by the sword.

CHAPTER LIX.

BOMBARDMENT OF KIEL.

On being joined by a regiment of Dutch, under Colonel Dübbelstern, brother of the burgomaster of Glückstadt, the expedition resolved upon by the council of war was against Kiel, where Count Kœningheim, lately Tilly's aide-de-camp, commanded. Knowing well the reputed bravery of the count, and, moreover, that, notwithstanding his Germanised name, he was our own countryman, we expected to encounter unusual difficulties and dangers in the performance of our duty.

Spring had passed and summer come again; the snows had melted; the woods were putting forth their bright green leaves, and the migratory storks had returned, from the unknown regions of the south, to their former nests under the cottage eaves, or on the steep old burgh gables and the older village spires.

At daybreak on the morning of the 1st of May, the whole of the king's small force embarked on board his vessels; the colonels of regiments, with their staffs and colours, were all on board the *Dana Catharina*; with my company, I accompanied Ian Dhu. Though we were at sea, and ploughing the waves of the Baltic, as we ran round Danische-walde our men did not forget to welcome the rising sun on that auspicious morning, by baking their Beltane bannocks in the old Highland fashion, and breaking them crosswise, with as much ceremony as if they were at home in the land of hills and valleys.

The sorrow and alarm of Ernestine were increased by the greater distance which was now to be placed between her and her sister, whom, from various reports that reached us, she firmly believed to be, as Bandolo had said, in the power of Merodé at Fredricksort. The good King Christian, to whom Ernestine was presented by Ian, did all in his power to console her.

"Madame," said he, among many other remarks, "it is useless now to regret that you so unwisely permitted your sister and yourself to be wiled away from the castle of the queen, my mother, at Nyekiöbing, by the cunning tale of a rascal. It is enough that you were so—that much evil has come of it—evil that we must undo. Necessity has seldom pity for women's tears—and

war, never! Yet, though my necessities are sore, and that, with scarcely three thousand men, I am wandering like a pirate among my own Danish isles, while Wallenstein and Tilly, with one hundred and thirty thousand men, have marched along the Elbe, and through all Juteland, even to the Skagen Cape, I will endeavour to free your sister from Fredricksort, though I may lose all in the attempt. Rest assured of that, lady. A week will not pass until I have done something in the matter. By force of arms perhaps I cannot reach her; but in my desperate fortune, though valour may fail, craft and guile may ultimately succeed."

"Within a week!" thought Ernestine, who could only weep and murmur her thanks; for in a week rescue might come too late, and under such terrible circumstances it seemed an age.

Considering the nature of the expedition we were bent on—the bombardment of a town—I was somewhat inclined to have left Ernestine behind us; but where could she have been left with safety to herself? Besides, as the honest and soldier-like king (who enjoyed as a capital joke the story of her throwing Bandolo's portmanteau into the duck-pond) said, this aggrieved personage was slippery and subtle as the great serpent, ferocious as a tiger, and now, being deprived of his gold, would place no bounds to his revenge; "consequently," said he, "the safest place for our pretty Imperialist is under the pennon of Sir Nickelas Valdemar, and the hatches of the *Anna Catharina*." The consciousness that Christian judged correctly, alarmed me so much that I could scarcely trust her out of my sight; but he gallantly relinquished to her use the great cabin, and dined among us in the gun-room, on cold salted beef and Dantziger beer: for this brave monarch loved better the jovial comradery of military society, than the hollow pomp that surrounded him as a king. As we rounded the point of the Danische-walde, and the yards were braced up, to run us into the Kielerfiörd, the magazines were opened, the guns cast loose, and the signal to stand to arms and to quarters was given from the king's ship.

Ernestine was conveyed to a place of safety in the deep dark hold of the *Anna Catharina*, where a little berth had been hastily fitted up for her accommodation, and where she was attended by the wife of one of our musketeers, a red-cheeked Holsteiner. There the din of the approaching cannonade would be less heard, and there could be little danger of shot striking the hull so far beneath the water-line.

As the wind blew hard, and veered almost ahead, we carried Austrian colours to deceive the garrison while tacking frequently across that narrow fiörd; but the breeze changed twice, and about sunset, we found ourselves abreast of the capital of

lstein, above the close steep roofs of which rose the square rick tower of its church, and the ramparts of that grim castle where the dukes of old resided, and on which, as well as on the university, we saw the white flag with the Imperial eagle unrolled; for, though our colours had misled Kœnigheim, our manœuvres (after we came abreast of the town, and began to lie round it in the form of a half circle, as it occupies a peninsula) no longer deceived him as to our intentions.

The old town of Kiel, which covers what had anciently been an island, is yet completely separated from the land by the wet ditch of the castle, the base of which is in some places washed by the sea. A large suburb, called the New Town, interspersed by pleasant rows of trees, was then rising on the mainland, and was connected with the Old by an ancient bridge, at the end of which was a drawbridge and gate, constantly guarded by a company of soldiers.

The walls of the strong and spacious castle became rapidly manned by musketeers in white buff coats, and cannoniers in carlet. Its eastern ramparts rose sheer from the salt water, along the margin of which, on the other side, lay the ducal garden, two hundred paces broad, and consisting of terraced walks rising above each other, beautifully arranged in the form of a labyrinth, and having in the centre a stone Triton, whose brass mouth shot up a silver current of water high above the green shrubbery; but now, among those fair parterres and terraced walks, the cannon baskets were placed at intervals, and between the deep fascines the grim culverins peered forth to sweep the harbour mouth.

The bells of the great church, of the university, and of the castle, were tolling an alarm as we approached, for each of these edifices was occupied by Austrian troops; and the seven ships of the king (we had three large and four small frigates) had now taken up their positions crescent-wise on three sides of the insulated city, hauled down their false colours, and run up the Royal standard of Denmark to the masthead. Then a simultaneous cannonade was opened upon us from the castle and its terraced gardens.

Being strong and active, our Highlanders were of great service in working the ship-artillery, by running back and urging forward the carriages; while the more skilful Danes pointed the cannon with great success, and thus the fascine batteries in the garden were soon ruined, the guns dismounted, and their men driven for shelter into the castle.

Sparing the tower of the church and the university, the three great ships maintained an unsparing and indiscriminate cannonade on the town; for though the capital of the duchy, the

seat of its trade and government, and containing the hotels of its principal nobles, Christian IV. was resolved at all hazards to dislodge the enemy, and more than once sent a red-hot 32-pound ball at the Count of Rantzau's mansion, which had a number of wooden galleries around it, hoping by these to set the whole place on fire—but without effect.

The whole fleet and town were soon enveloped in smoke, and we could only direct our fire by seeing the vane of the church and the towers of the castle shining in the last flush of the sunset above this murky cloud. A hundred pieces of cannon, ranging from carthouns (48-pounders) to demi-culverins (9-pounders), were discharged by the fleet upon the town, from whence the garrison, the strength of which was very great, maintained a desperate cannonade, pouring in reply a shower of balls and missiles of every sort and size, shot from bombards and carthouns, fieldpieces, and iron slings. Their mortars and bombards (100lb pieces) were loaded with stones, tiles, old jars, junks of iron and lead, nails and chains, which swept over our decks, and tore through the sails and rigging like a volley from a volcano. The whole conflict was maintained by great guns; hence the din was terrible. I believe there were not less than two hundred and forty pieces engaged on both sides. Strewed with killed and wounded men, some of whom were minus legs, arms, or heads, others cut in two, with their entrails shot away and twisted round the ragged and torn rigging, or wallowing in blood among the ruin of booms and boats, or splintered planks and shattered bulwarks, the main-decks of the fleet presented the most frightful scene of carnage, smoke, and fire, united with the most infernal medley of appalling sounds—stern orders, bellowed in hoarse Danish through tin speaking-trumpets—shrieks, cries, and groans—the grating of the gun-carriages, the trampling of many feet, the crash of falling spars, the rattle of striking shot, and the hiss of those that swept over us into the water.

An immense number of our Highlanders were killed and wounded: of the foreigners I make no account. Torquil Gorm, our piper-major, who sat upon the capstan blowing *Brattach bhàn clàn Aoidh*, was knocked off his perch by a 12-pound shot, and only escaped death by a miracle. Lieutenants Stuart and Lumsden (Invergellie) were severely wounded, and Kildon and Culcraigie had each a brother—who was sergeant of their pike—killed beside them.

Finding that nothing was to be made of Kiel—that his ships were becoming mere slaughter-houses and wrecks, which bled at every port and pore—the king, as it was too dark to see flags, hoisted a lantern at his foremast-head as a sign to cease firing, and drop down the fiörd before the wind. I cannot say that the

order was obeyed with reluctance; and, favoured by a strong western breeze, the fleet rapidly bore away beyond the reach of cannon-shot, and lay-to, waiting for fresh orders.

Far out on the open fiord, with the stillness of the midnight ocean round us, and no sound to break it but the cries that came from the wounded and the dying, there seemed something dull, monotonous, and deathlike in our vessels now; they were but floating charnel-houses. Some of the smaller were under jury-masts, and the sides of all were perforated by round shot-holes, like the top of a pepper-castor. In others, the torn sails were lapping against the splintered masts, and the rigging hung in disorder. It was a sad scene of desolation, agony, and death, which in twenty minutes had succeeded the fury of the bombardment. I hastened to Ernestine, whom I found in a little nook of the hold, in a stupor of astonishment and terror, and unable to weep. I had only time to assure her of my perfect safety, when I heard a drum beating on the main-deck, and Phadrig Mhor shouted down the hatchway that the king required the presence of all the officers in the great cabin.

There I hastened, and found him with the Count de Montgomery, the colonels of the Scots, Danes, and Dutch, Ian, the Baron Karl, and other officers, many of whom had their heads and arms bandaged. The cabin bore sufficient token of the number of heavy shot that had passed through it; the ports were yet open, and the dead bodies of several seamen were still lying by the larboard guns, just where they had fallen.

"Cavaliers and comrades," said the king; "I wish to burn Kiel, but no shelter may remain there for the Austrians. One among you must undertake to do this for me, as I am less active than I was wont to be; but, as the duty is desperate, I will not select any of my allies. Let the Scots, French, Dutch, and Danish colonels cast lots for who shall have the honour of performing this arduous service, after which we shall all sail merrily, and on at Gottenburg."

It was at once assented to: we crowded round the table; lots were cast in Karl's helmet, and the duty fell to the Dutch, as the rize was drawn by old Dübbelstiern, whom the king desired to elect a party for the service, and accordingly he chose his entire attalion. This was considered absurd; but whether it was that Herr Dübblstiern was of opinion that he had seen quite enough of fighting for one night, or that it was the constitutional phlegm and slowness of the Dutch character which operated, I know not; but the impetuous king became enraged at their delay, and ordered lots to be cast again.

"Nay," said Ian, nobly; "may it please your majesty to excuse me from drawing lots again, for I cannot condescend to do so

twice. Give me but a hundred musketeers of my own regiment, and I will burn Kiel to your majesty's entire satisfaction."

"My company and I are at your service, Ian," said I, acting on the first impulse of the moment.

"It is gallantly offered," said the king; "a thousand thanks, my valiant Scots. Away then to your boats, for before the Dutch are under arms day will have broken."

In ten minutes my company were all in three large boats, sitting closely packed with their muskets between their knees; and with muffled oars we pulled softly towards the town. Our Highlanders roughly jeered the Dutch, desiring them to beat the *Scots March*, and keep up their courage thereby, as they were often glad to do in Flanders, when they wished to deceive and scare the enemy.*

CHAPTER LX.

A HORRIBLE ADVENTURE.

WE were provided with several fireballs and pots of wild-fire, a combustible composition so called from its ready ignition, for the amiable purpose of burning Kiel, and were guided by the purser of Sir Nickelas Valdemar, who, in more peaceful times, had been a distiller of corn-brandy, and was wont to attend the great annual fair in that town—the *Kieler umschlag*. We pulled softly over the darkened water. Ian sat in the stern of the leading boat, and between me and the dull sky I saw the eagle's wing that surmounted the cone of his steel bonnet, as he sat erect and towering above all his soldiers. His drawn sword, with its long Gaëlic motto—that old hereditary heirloom of his race, which was never a moment from his side—was in his hand. I have heard Ian assert that this ancient blade possessed the property of inspiring courage, like the *Feadhan Dhu* of the clan Chattan. "The sword of a brave man always stirs the heart to gallant deeds," he would say; "and this sword has been wielded by many generations of heroes."

Behind him the Lochaber axe of Phadrig Mhor was glinting in the starlight; for wherever Ian was, there Phadrig was sure to be.

Though weakened, and by my recent bruises somewhat nervous and excitable, I thought I was rather rash in venturing on this desperate service; and now, when in the open boat, came the re-

* Here Munro corroborates our cavalier. "We that were officers met together in the Admirall Shipe, and agreed to command out the partie, and having cast lots it fell on the Dutch. They, suspecting the danger, delayed." Sergeant McLeod of Captain Mackenzie's company "was killed," continues the colonel, "and twenty-two souldiers out of our regiment, that I commanded."—*Expedition with the worthy Scots Regiment*. Fol. 1637.

lection of what would be Ernestine's desolation and grief, if I was knocked on the head as the reward of my restless ambition.

As we pulled shoreward the night became intensely dark, so much so that we feared, unless lights were burned, we should never be able to regain our ships.

All seemed quiet as we approached the town, and, save an occasional light glimmering in the vast masses of the old castle, here was no sign of life in the place; but we knew that Count Löningheim had not less than 2000 men in garrison, and of their extermination we had recently received the most ample proof.

Ian had observed that on the right flank of the town, along the gulf or haven, there lay a beautiful walk, bordered by several rows of lofty trees, which were now in full foliage, and would conceal our approach.

Where the boats grounded the beach was silent and still. The whole place seemed deserted. Not a leaf was stirring now, for even the western wind had died away, and we heard only the waves of the Kielerfiörd chafing on the bulwarks of the path as we landed. Ian Dhu was the first who sprang ashore, and, with their muskets loaded, our men formed in file and marched towards the town, the walls of which were about two hundred yards distant. Our service was a strange and desperate one; for the enemy had cavalry, whose patrols might have cut us off, and, if an alarm had been given, our boats must have run the gauntlet along the lower gun-batteries before we could regain the fleet.

"However," said Ian, to whom I mentioned these probabilities, "our firepots will find them work enough, and enable us to get clear off."

Marching in silence, and halting once or twice to listen while shrouded by the bordering trees, we found ourselves near the strong postern gate, over which grinned a couple of forty-eight pounders; but our guide, the purser, who had been in the habit of conveying his barrels to the fair without the ceremony of showing them to the keepers or leviers of duty at the barriers, led us towards a small house that he knew of. This place proved to be deserted. He raised the flooring, and revealed to us a secret passage which led under the walls and directly into the town.

I shall never forget the exciting emotions we experienced, when, after crawling through a hole, dark and dusty, like an ancient drain, we issued from a small shed, under which it opened into a gloomy and deserted street, where, with Phadrig Mhor, his chief, and six chosen Highlanders, I found myself within the walls and gates, the guards and cannon, of Kiel. The rest of our men, to the number of ninety-four, occupied the cottage without, ready to succour us or secure our retreat.

The storks uttered unearthly sounds, and flapped their win-

over our heads. They appeared to be the only inhabitants in that part of the town; and from the postern already mentioned, a street opened westward, in one unbroken line, straight to the market-place.

"What large building is that, Herr?" asked Ian, pointing with his sword to an edifice near us; "is it a church?"

"No," replied the purser, "it is the hall where the high Court of Appeal for the duchy sits; the enemy have turned it into a magazine for powder."

"Powder! then the high Court of Appeal shall sit there no more, Mein Herr; for we will blow it up."

"It is guarded—see, yonder is the sentinel, walking to and fro before the building," said the purser; but the soldier indicated could not discern us, as our men stood with their backs close to the houses, and under their shadow. "But as to blowing it up, Herr Schottlander, I beseech of you not to think of that," continued the purser, "for it will create an alarm, and totally prevent our escape. Let us content ourselves by placing these firepots with lighted matches in some of the empty houses, and then retiring the way we came."

"Dioul! but I think you are right, master purser," said Ian; "besides, Herr, when the town is on fire the magazine must blow up as a matter of course. Softly, then, comrades—this way," he added, to the six Highlanders, who had slung their muskets to enable them the better to bear the combustibles with which they were loaded.

At that moment we heard the Imperialist who guarded the front door of the Court of Appeal challenge some one who approached his post.

A voice replied, and an officer muffled in a long mantle, wearing a broad hat and slouching feather, followed by three pikemen, passed down the centre of the street, to visit the guard at that postern gate which the purser's friendly cottage, with its smuggling trapdoor, had enabled us to avoid.

They passed us within half a pistol-shot, and then we could hear the rattle of arms as the sentinel at the gate turned out the guard, and the officer with his escort departed to visit some other post.

"Now, there is not a moment to be lost," said Ian; "let us fire these houses next the magazine, and then escape by yonder fox-hole."

It was done in less than five minutes.

We entered the empty houses, either by forcing the doors or removing the windows, but as softly as possible. Ian selected one, Phadrig a second, and I a third. We placed the firepots and wild-fire in the centre of the floors; heaped them over with

raw and oiled chips of wood brought from the fleet; then we lit the matches, and hurried back to the street.

The matches were supposed to burn gradually for five minutes, by which time we expected to be clear of Kiel, and on the high-road to our boats. Accompanied by Gillian M'Bane and Donald F'Vurich, I had just completed my preparations for giving at least on our house a comfortable heating, and, firing the match, hastened out to the street, when we were met, face to face, by—
—hom? The Imperial officer and his three pikemen, returning assuredly from their rounds, and singing a carol to the tramp of their own feet.

Having accomplished our work sooner than Ian or his henchman, we were unfortunately the first in the street, and the Imperialists were confounded to find themselves confronted by three armed men in the Scottish garb. Our swords were ready, my two musketeers blew their matches, and the Austrian pikemen levelled their weapons to the charge.

"Fire and fagot! how came you here?" asked the officer, whose voice made me start; "yield, sirs, for I would not have you killed if I can save you."

"Count Kœnigheim!" said I, recognising him; "back—back—give way; for we will die weapon in hand, but never yield. For the sake of Ernestine," I added, in a loud and earnest whisper, "let this be a drawn conflict—for if I am slain she will be without a protector."

"Villain!" he exclaimed, with fierce joy, "art thou the Captain lollo?"

"The same, at your service, count," said I, as our blades were pressed hard against each other; "but why so bitter an epithet to a brother Scot, for such I should be, though under a different manner?"

"You have stolen the daughter of my friend from the court of the Danish queen, and for these many weeks past have conveyed her from ship to ship, and isle to isle—all to the severe prejudice of her honour."

"It is a villain's thought and a falsehood, which none but a villain could conceive," said I, furiously; "but she is your affianced wife, and——"

The count uttered a bitter laugh; then, trembling with passion, he rushed upon me like a cannon-ball, and gave me a succession of fierce thrusts, all of which I succeeded in parrying.

"My affianced wife—my affianced wife, indeed!" he continued, giving me another and another. "Oh, fool of fools! do you not know that, with all her beauty, I would not wed her if she had the Bohemian crown upon her brow, and the wealth of India at her feet?"

While this was passing, the purser had dived into his secret hole, and vanished like a ghost at cock-crow. Ian, the sergeant, and our other four soldiers, came to the appointed place, and found me fencing away like a sword-player with Kœningheim, whom they only knew to be an Imperialist. The three pikemen fled, believing the town to be in possession of the enemy; and Ian, who, like a true Highlander, would not permit the single combat to be interrupted, stood between us and the six musketeers (who continued ominously to blow their matches), and, leaning on his long sword, watched with a fierce but anxious eye every turn of the desperate game.

The red sparks flew in showers from the steel blades; we were both so expert, that not a scar was given or received on either side; but I was still so weak, that step by step I was driven back towards the Hall of Appeals. I called repeatedly to Ian, to Phadrig, and the soldiers, to regain the boats and leave me to my fate; but they still remained, although the blaze of the burning houses began to flash across the thoroughfare, and we heard the drums beating in every quarter, as the various guards at different points of the city rushed to their colours, and the whole garrison became alarmed.

It was a time of desperation!

Ian by one thrust of his long sword, Phadrig by one blow of his tremendous axe, or our musketeers by a single shot, could have ended the conflict and the life of Kœningheim together; but this the chivalry of Highland warfare would by no means permit. Thus the duel continued, the conflagration increased, and the long angry roll of the drums rang the call to arms in castle and cantonments, at the gates and all along the harbour. Every moment I felt assured that Kœningheim was becoming stronger than me. My sight became dim, and I was beaten backward until I found myself driven against a door at the corner of a lane. I staggered—it yielded; and then I fell headlong—not into a passage—but down into a deep, dark hole—a cellar, or some such place.

The street, the wavering light that filled it, vanished from me in an instant, as I descended into total darkness.

At that moment I heard a confused discharge of muskets, and an awful explosion, with a roar and the sensation of everything being convulsed below and around me, as if the earth were splitting into halves, and I knew that it was the stately Hall of Appeals which had been blown up like a house of cards.

I cannot describe the crash—the mighty torrent of united sounds—the rending asunder of massive walls—the bursting of arches, knitted together centuries ago—the cracking of oaken

beams, amid a whirlwind of bricks and mortar, slates and rubbish, as the house under which I had fallen crumbled into ruin in a moment; and though I did not feel anything crushing me down, I had the horrible conviction of being entombed beneath a mass of fallen masonry and timber.

My claymore was still in my hand; the earth was damp, and I lay upon it breathless, gasping, and almost stunned for a time. Then a drowsy sensation came over me, and for half an hour or so I seemed to be in a kind of waking dream.

CHAPTER LXI.

SUFFOCATION—THE DARK PIT.

"WHERE the deuce am I?" was my first thought and exclamation on rallying my scattered energies.

I was painfully certain of entombment under a mountain of fallen masonry, which, for ought that I could foresee, might not in these times of trouble be removed for years. The air soon became close and oppressive. I began an examination of the trap into which I had fallen, by feeling all round me with outspread hands; for the darkness was as dense as if I had been shut up in a block of marble.

The ceiling—if it could be called so—was composed of beams of hard wood planked over, being evidently the floor of an apartment above; and by the dull, dead sound those planks returned, when striking on them with the hilt of my sword, I became convinced that the whole *débris* of a fallen house was heaped above me! Of this I was the more certain on discovering that the trap-door, through which I had passed, was choked up by fragments of torn partitions, beams and stones, which I could grasp with my hands when standing upon a barrel over which I had stumbled in the dark. Around me were four stone walls, forming an area of about twenty feet by fifteen, and below me was the damp earth. I was undoubtedly buried alive in a cellar, from which escape seemed hopeless.

As this terrible conviction came home to my mind, the perspiration oozed from every pore, and a pang of agony entered my heart like a sharp poniard. My emotions cannot be described, and thoughts that were bitter and heart-rending came crowding upon me like a torrent.

Ernestine, whom I would never see more—whose voice I would never hear again—and whose dark eye would never turn to mir with its mild inquiring glance, or its glad and roguish smile, w

left among rough soldiers and rougher sailors on board of Christian's wandering fleet. exposed to danger, and perhaps to insult; for, when I was dead, to whom could she turn with confidence for protection? And Gabrielle, too! Gabrielle, whom I had hoped to free and restore to her, would now be left hopelessly the prisoner of Merodé, exposed to greater perils, and such as it was impossible to consider with calmness or contemplate with patience.

Doubtless brave Ian Dhu might protect Ernestine and free Gabrielle, even as I would have done; but, remembering the dangers that surrounded him only an hour ago, and the musket-shots I had heard, it was more than probable that he and all who were with him had fallen in combat, and were now lying in the ruined street—perhaps not twenty yards from me. Whether he and Kœnigheim too had escaped, or perished by the explosion, was all a mystery to me; but the former seemed next to an impossibility; and I pictured the anguish of Ernestine when morning stole into the dull and comfortless cabin of the *Anna Catharina*—when the bright sun came to gladden the grey waters—when the waves rolled in light, and Denmark's flat but wooded shores were sparkling in the sunny haze—when hour after hour would steal away, and when I did not come! What would be her emotions when the terrible truth was told her by some survivor of our raid to Kiel?

The atmosphere of the place gradually became closer and more difficult to inhale; at times I thought this was fancy—at others, reality; but perhaps my nervous and excited state exaggerated the truth. I thought with horror of the pangs of hunger and thirst to be endured before I should die; my fate, ignominious and unhonoured; my unshared, solitary, and unimagined agonies—even my grave might never be known. My death might be mourned for while I was yet alive; for I calculated on living for many days yet to come.

Again and again all these thoughts, and others of home and my dear native country, recurred to me; again and again they returned, each time with renewed poignancy and bitterness, and the anticipation of dying there unknown, was as bad for a time as those of hunger and thirst. The vulgar fear of being devoured by rats was not the least of my torments; for of these vermin, I had born in me a powerful and unconquerable aversion.

The air seemed to grow stifling. I shouted with that loud "hallo" which, many a time and oft, I had sent far through the Highland deer forests; but my own voice sounded dull and faint as it was returned upon my ear.

Overburdened by thought and anxiety, my heart became sick and weary; my head ached as the oppression of the atmosphere

became greater ; and I have no doubt that the effect of my recent wound—the contusion received at Eckernförde—greatly contributed to exaggerate all that the darkness, mystery, loneliness, and the anticipation of a most horrible death, could produce on an active imagination.

The Imperialists would think no more of me than of the last year's leaves ; and the idea of their digging for me, even if Kœningheim escaped, seemed simply absurd.

I endeavoured to picture the slow agonies of a death by hunger and thirst, but shrunk from the task, and remembered to have heard my mother tell me, that when David Duke of Rothesay was found dead in the vault of Falkland-tower, in his hunger and madness he had gnawed and torn with his teeth the flesh from his left arm. Could I ever be reduced to such a state ?

My bones might lie for ten, twenty, or even a hundred years, before discovery ; and I thought grimly of the speculation they might excite, when some grave pathologist delivered his opinion, and when men spoke of the wars of other times—those wars of which their sires had spoken, and in which their grandsires fought ; and I remembered the various instances of bones being brought to light under similar circumstances, and under my own observation, the vague mystery and fear with which these poor reliques of humanity were regarded by those who endeavoured in vain to conjecture the story that belonged to them ; the crime perpetrated, or the wrong endured—the story that none could tell, and which would never be known until the last trumpet rent the earth to its centre.

I began to feel weak, helpless, and confused, and listened with agonised intensity to catch any sound, however distant ; and then, as before, it seemed as if many a voice with which I was familiar came to me. My mind wandered ; I imagined myself again on board the king's ship, and amid the smoke, carnage, and boom of the cannonade. Then came other ideas of strife—an imaginary conflict ; Ian with his eagle's plume, red-bearded Angus M'Alpine, Kildon with his M'Kenzies, M'Coll of that ilk, and all the gallant hearts of our regiment were by my side. I heard the yell of Torquil's pipe ; I saw the tartans waving, the red musketry flashing as its echoes rolled over hill and valley ; I saw the gleam of steel, and felt the glow of the bright warm sun of a summer noon, as it shone on the broad arena of a bloody battle. I brandished my sword—I shouted. Kœningheim was again before me ; his steel rang on mine, and I was conscious that Bاندولو, poniard in hand, was gliding near me like a serpent.

All this wild vision and its excitement evaporated, and I believe that I must have slept ; for long after, on awakening once again to the horrors of that dark and living tomb, and, worse than all

to my own tormenting thoughts, I found myself lying on the damp ground.

Was it night or was it day on the upper earth? In that palpable darkness, no one could tell.

I listened, and heard my heart beating. At times I thought there came other sounds to me, in my loneliness. Once a horse's hoofs rang on the pavement; a dragoon had perhaps passed through an adjacent street. At another time I heard the faint note of a trumpet; and these sounds served but to increase my fretful eagerness to be free.

I do not think that I prayed aloud to Heaven to help me; but many a deep, pious, and fervent thought swelled my heart; and after a time I took courage, and searched my whole prison minutely again for some crack, joint, or cranny by which a passage might be forced.

Around me the walls were as solid as stone could make them; above me were the oaken beams and jointed planks, rendered quite as solid and immovable by the superincumbent load of a fallen house.

I sat down again in despair. My head was still aching, and my breast was oppressed by the difficulty experienced in respiration; my weakness and helplessness increased; sensations of suffocation were coming on, and at length I lay on the earth in the belief that I was dying. My soul trembled at the terrible conviction that I was on the verge of eternity, and I endeavoured to pray, but my thoughts and words were all too incoherent for utterance.

Wild visions floated before me, with long blanks and pauses between; and during these blanks I now believe that I must have been insensible.

My tongue was parched and burning; then imaginary fountains of pure water gushed and sparkled in the sunshine, as they poured over cool and mossy rocks into deep and shady dells; in some instances, when I approached them, the water seemed to vanish, and the bare and arid rock alone remained; in others. I was bound and fettered hand and foot, unable to move, and saw the gurgling water winding between flowery borders into the shady recesses of a wooded dell. I stretched my hands towards it; but a mighty incubus weighed down my limbs, then the vision passed away, and I lay prostrate and gasping amid a dark, a moist, and noxious atmosphere.

Many hours must thus have passed away—not less, perhaps, than six-and-thirty. I imagined that Ernestine spoke to me from time to time, and I heard her voice coming as from a vast distance. She was laughing, and we were among summer fields—here the yellow corn was waving; where the green trees rustled

their heavy foliage in the warm breeze, and the glossy ravens were wheeling aloft into a blue and sunny sky.

Then I heard the sound of other voices, the clink of axes and grating of shovels; I thought that the hour of deliverance was at hand; that I was about to be dug out, and restored to the upper world, and I laughed with joy. The German soldiers were jesting and singing at their work, as they seemed to draw nearer and nearer to me.

Then I heard Kœningheim say that their labour was in vain, and might be relinquished, for by this time I must assuredly be dead—and I heard them retire! Methought I strove to shout, to let them hear that I still lived, but my tongue clove to the roof of my parched throat—my hard and baked lips refused their office, and the horror of the dream awoke me for an instant to the life I had been assured was gradually passing away from me.

Still the same darkness, the same solemn stillness, the same mysterious and horrible abandonment. I sank again; but the old vision returned with the clank of shovels and axes, the rattle of stones and crow-bars, with a laugh or an oath, as the German pioneers cleared away the rubbish, till their feet and implements sounded distinctly on the planks of oak. Oh! it was a delicious and a joyous dream!

Then all at once there burst upon my half-blinded eyes a stream of glorious sunlight, with the pure and refreshing air, as one pickaxe was inserted, and a plank torn up; then, but not till then, did I learn that it was no dream, but a dear reality, and that I was saved! I heard three or four soldiers drop after each other into the pit; strong hands were laid upon me, and I was lifted up from among the ruins; then a horn of Neckar wine was given me, for I was faint and trembling. I soon revived, but with the utmost difficulty retained my eyes open, after such a long immersion in Cimmerian gloom; and I was so feeble, that Kœningheim and one of his officers had to support me between them, as they conveyed me through the ruined street towards the castle of Kiel.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE CASTLE OF KIEL.

FRESH air and light, a little food and wine, with one night's sound sleep, completely restored me.

Partially undressed, and with a rich velvet mantle thrown over me, I was lying upon a beautiful bed, which, as I afterwards

learned, was the couch of that valiant Duke of Holstein, Adolph, archbishop of Bremen, who overran the Ditmarsch, and compelled the proud Hamburgers do him homage. The four columns sustaining the canopy were of exquisitely carved oak; the canopy itself, and the coverlet, were of blue silk, brocaded with gold flowers; the former was surmounted by plumes of feathers, and was lined with white silk, fringed with silver within and gold without. It was too luxurious, and seemed like a beautiful toy, made only to be admired, or for a fairy to sleep in. The apartment was neither wainscoted nor tapestried, but was hung with matting of shining straw; the ceiling was composed of oak, the beams of which intersected each other, forming panels wherein had been recently emblazoned all the armorial bearings of Christian IV.; the variously-coloured lions of Denmark, Sleswig, Norway, and Gothland; the golden dragon of Schonen; the paschal lamb of Juteland; the blue cavalier of Ditmarsch; the nettle-leaves of Holstein; the cygnet of Stormar; the cross of Oldenburg, &c. &c.; the leopard, the crossed spears, and the crowned savages, wreathed and armed with clubs. Three windows of stained glass faced the Gulf of Kiel; one of these had been broken by the passage of a cannon-shot, and fragments of the iron bars and brass wire which formed the latticed grating were visible beyond.

The whole furniture was in confusion; in some places mirrors were broken; in others, were pictures that bore strong traces of having received a passing slash from a sword.

I had just made a survey of all this by one glance, and, throwing aside the mantle, was about to rise, when Count Kœnigheim, who had been writing in a recess of one of the windows—for the castle walls were of enormous thickness—approached, and bade me good-morning.

I gave my hand to this soldier of fortune, who, only a night or two ago, had expressed his rage at me for loving a woman whom he vowed not to marry even if she was a queen, with the wealth of India for her dowery.

"Well, my comrade," said he, after a few words of compliment and inquiry had passed; "Zounds! was not yonder blow-up a rough interruption of our tilting-match?"

"Your magazine of powder, was it not?"

"Twenty tons were stored up in the Hall of Appeal. On the night of the bombardment I had a saucisson laid, and the hall undermined, to blow up the whole in case of being obliged to abandon Kiel. Your partial conflagration fired the saucisson, and has cost the emperor more powder than he will probably commit to my care again—for some time at least.

"And my comrades—did they all escape?"

"All, save one. Favoured by the confusion, they vanished

the streets, and, regaining their boats, got clear off; but that entrance will not serve their purpose a second time."

"And he who did not escape?" said I.

"Now hanging from yonder tower," said the count, opening the pointed windows, and showing me a prospect of the chief feature of which was the great square tower of church, with its lofty and tapering hexagonal spire, from the top of which there dangled something like a crow. I could give it to be a human figure, but diminished by distance, and swinging in the sea-breeze; it swung to and fro, now against the sky and now a few feet from it in the air.

"Count Kœningheim," said I, turning with anxiety and indignation from this startling spectacle, "and have you—who, like me, am a Scottish soldier of fortune—dared to hang one of our comrades?"

"Yonder Danish purser, whilom a distiller and smuggler, one of your comrades, then I have indeed dared to do so."

"The poor man was only serving his king and his country."

"He has cost the Emperor twenty tons of good gunpowder—an answerable argument," replied the count, as he folded up

his dispatch and endorsed it to Tilly, whose troops were down there about the mouth of the Elbe. "And did you really

me, Captain Rollo, that I would have hanged one of our Scots, as I hung yonder purser? *Hawks dinna pyke oot*

seen; and I assure you, that although we fight under different banners, I love the blue bonnet far too well to hang its

carrier as a Danish scarecrow. In the devilish mood I was in the night of the bombardment, I would have thought no more

of saving you, if able, than of taking this glass of wine; but the affair was over—after I thought you fairly crushed to

death, and a day or two had elapsed—it seemed a shame and a

trial to me that a brave Scot, with the tartan on his breast and the kilt above his knee, should lie uncoffined like a dog under

an open house. I set the pioneers of Camargo to dig out your remains, and had fully resolved to inter them with all the honours

due in the great church of the good city of Kiel. We had not the most remote hope of finding you alive in the vault, like

the Dane in that dungeon under Cronborg Castle, where, the legend says, he has sat for a thousand years with his

knights around him."

"And where is the Danish fleet?"

"At the mouth of the gulf, where Christian has landed, and ordered your regiment of Highlanders to erect a strong sconce on the shore. But enough of these things at present. You will

fast with me, and then we will talk of military business—wards."

"Business," thought I, "that must mean my transmission as a prisoner of war into Central Germany!" He led me through various apartments to one, the princely magnificence of which excited my admiration. Koenigheim laughed at me, saying—

"Ere long, there may be no other hangings on those walls than such as the spider spins."

During breakfast he asked me many questions concerning Ernestine—casually, concerning her health and amusements, but all with kindness, and without the slightest tinge of jealousy. Though his friendship was sincere, it was evident that he did not love her. There was a riddle in this? The count, her father—old Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume—was at Vienna, and was soon expected by the army to resume the command of his division. The poor man consequently still believed that his daughters were in perfect safety with the old Queen of Denmark.

"Then," said I, "neither you nor he are aware that Gabrielle has been abducted by Merodé?"

"Merodé—abducted!" stammered Koenigheim, as his sun-burnt cheek grew pale, and then flushed with anger; "do you tell me that Merodé has dared——"

As briefly as possible I related the dangers into which the sisters had fallen; the affair of Bandolo, and the retention of Gabrielle at Fredricksort.

The count thrust his breakfast from him.

"Fire and sword!" he exclaimed; "to know now that they have been in the Wehlder, within a few toises of my outposts, and I knew not of it! Oh! Captain Rollo, I love those girls as if they were my own sisters—for they are good, amiable, winning, and indeed most loveable; yet withal, and notwithstanding Carlstein's kind intentions, believe me I have no more idea of marriage than of flying in the air. Oh no! I shall never marry! I do not think that the world possesses a daughter of Eve who could tempt me to forsake the camp for her bower, or the head of my regiment for the poor pastime of dangling at her skirt. Fortunately, it is not far from this to Fredricksort, and Gabrielle shall be freed even if we must take the place by storm. Ten devils! to think she has been so long with such a man as Merodé!"

"Perhaps he is not so bad as rumour makes him. He may respect the high rank and perfect purity of Gabrielle."

"Respect—he, Merodé!" reiterated Koenigheim, with an angry laugh; "we might as well expect heaven and hell to change places, as to find one virtuous emotion in the heart of that ignoble soldier. The fool! he thinks that poor Carlstein is in hopeless disgrace, when at this very hour he may be travelling from Vienna with greater honours than any of us, save Wallen-

stein, have yet attained. Rest assured that I will free Gabrielle, and protect her until she is restored to her father or her sister. If Merodé will not yield her," continued Kœningheim, beginning to buckle on his cuirass and sword, "by Heaven! I will pistol him at the head of his regiment. I am not a man who stands on trifles, neither is Carlstein—old Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume, as we Imperialists call him."

"You lads of the black eagle make small account of human life, and value blood no more than water."

"Blood!" he muttered, while continuing to arm himself; "the shedding of it under harness is but a matter of necessity. Yet, alas! Captain Rollo, by a fatal mischance, and in a moment of ungoverned passion, my disastrous hand has shed the blood of one whose fate hath cast a horror over my path in life. Wherever I have gone—in the camp and in the city, in the field and on the ocean, on the Scottish hills and on the German plains—that cloud has overhung me! With my own existence only, the cloud and the horror will pass away; but the memory of the deed I have done will never die in the peaceful spot which was blighted and cursed by its committal. I destroyed a life, to preserve and to defend which I would have given my own a thousand times over, could such have been; but let me not recur to these old memories, for they madden and unman me!"

A dark shade had overspread the handsome face of Kœningheim—his eyes were saddened, and a spasm contracted his features; but, without remarking the bitterness of his emotion, I continued to assist him in accoutring, and also armed myself; for I had begun to entertain faint hopes of not being kept as a prisoner after all.

"Come, come, Kœningheim," said I; "you are not the only man who has slain a dear friend in a sudden quarrel."

"Friend!" he repeated, in a voice that made me start.

"No; when wine is in the head, and when the sword is in the hand, such things will happen," I continued, supposing that he referred to an unfortunate duel.

"Oh no!" said he, mournfully; "such deeds as mine are done but seldom—yet, let me not think of it! Peace—solitude—at such times madden me. Action! action! that is the only relief, come with me, then; let us ride for Fredricksort, and save Gabrielle from Merodé—the lamb from the wolf—the dove from the vulture."

We descended to the gate of Kiel, for the hope of liberty and of freeing Gabrielle restored me to fresh energy; and though Kœningheim expressed his doubts of my ability for exertion, I raised every objection, and, accompanied by four dragoons of the regiment de Wingarti, who wore black iron helmets

coralets, white buff coats with wide skirts edged by red cloth, jackboots, swords, musketoons, and pistols, we set forth; and though scarcely able to keep on my saddle, by weakness resulting from recent mishaps at Eckernfiörd and Kiel, I was never behind Kœnigheim by the length of my horse's head.

To be brief, after a hard ride round the shore of the gulf, and seeing everywhere the poor peasantry flying at our approach to moor, morass, and woodland, we reached the great fortress of Fredricksort, only to find it a pile of dismantled and blackened ruins; for, in some of their wild excesses, Merodé's officers (on the very night we were bombarding Kiel) had set their quarters on fire. They were thus compelled to remove to a neighbouring village, from whence—by orders received direct from Wallenstein—they had marched no one knew whither; but by certain smoky indications at the horizon, we supposed their route lay towards Flensburg. Merodé had several ladies with him in caleches, and a number of other women, and a vast quantity of plunder, in waggons and on horses; thus his regiment marched off like a triumphal procession, singing in chorus, with all their drums beating and colours flying, and with crowds of camp followers mingling and shouting among their riotous and disorderly ranks.

Such was the account we received from the tall Jesuit, Father Ignatius, who had visited Fredricksort on the same good errand that had brought us from Kiel, and whom we met, fortunately, in a narrow green lane near the ruined castle), where the good man had dismounted from his mule, and taken off its bridle, that the animal might crop the herbage that grew by the wayside.

Accompanied by the Jesuit, we returned towards Kiel with the unpleasant conviction that our journey had been perfectly futile; and having a fresh source of anxiety in the doubt, whether Merodé had taken Gabrielle away with his *ladies* who occupied the carriages, or whether the poor girl had perished among the flames of the burning fortress.

"There were no less than six waggons crowded by soldiers' wives, all as drunk as liquor could make them," said Father Ignatius.

"'Tis fortunate for those ladies that the old Roman law, by which a husband could slay his wife if her breath indicated wine, no longer exists," said I.

"But those ammunition-wives smelt only of schnaps and brandy," said the priest, turning up his eyes.

Book the Tenth.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE HIGHLAND OUTPOST.

THROUGH tracts of level land, as yet unscathed by war; along ridge-roads, bordered by rich meadows and comfortable farm-houses; and through little towns, that were as picturesque and as pretty as bright red bricks, spotless plaster, and paint could make them,—we rode back by the way we had come. On one side lay the gulf; on the other, occasional tarns and groves of wood, covering the gentle slopes that rose almost imperceptibly from the margin of the dark blue sea. Yet the denizens of those pleasant places were all bondsmen; and, without consent of the lord from whom they held their *hufe* by tenure, could neither marry nor give in marriage, become craftsmen, or engage in service elsewhere than in the land on which they were born.

All those places, too, swarmed with supernatural inhabitants, who were a source of terror to the poor peasantry. The little hillocks were inhabited by wicked and avaricious but industrious gnomes; the moors, by tall, pale, and beautiful Elfe women, who attracted young men by their winning gestures, and then breathed in their faces to make them sicken and die. All the wells and lakes were enchanted—here a fiery dragon watched the ransom of a king; there the wild huntsman kennelled his black hounds; here dwelt a witch who sold fair winds; there, a devil who wrought all manner of mischief. But at that time our minds were full of other things; and we rode round the margin of the Jælerfjörd, accompanied by the tall priest, whose long legs, as he bestrode his mule, almost reached to the ground on each side.

"I have heard that Carlstein freed you without ransom, after being taken prisoner in Luneburg," said Kœningheim.

"Without ransom!—I need scarcely thank him for that, being so poor that I might have remained captive until the day of doom. I could only give the good count my thanks, and leave him my best wishes."

"And your heart, too—is it not so? Well, I must not be less generous; besides, the Emperor has more prisoners at Vienna than he knows what to do with. Your comrades have landed, as I mentioned, some twenty miles down the gulf, and are there forming a scone, with what object, and for what service, the brave King Christian only knows; but, before returning to Kiel, I shall see you safe within pistol-shot of his outposts."

"Count," said I, "you shall ever be remembered among my dearest friends."

"Among soldiers friendship soon ripens, and a short acquaintance goes a long way. Is it not so, Father Ignatius?"

The Jesuit was too much occupied by his own thoughts to make any reply.

"Do not omit to impress upon poor Ernestine, that before another week is past, if her sister is between the Elbe and the Liimfiörd, she shall be free, and the insults she has suffered will be dearly avenged; for the old count is coming, and Merodé cannot escape us both."

"Have you no kinder message than this?"

"I know of none that would be more welcome—from me, at least. Besides," said he, turning with a bitter curl on his fine lip, "what other message would you have me send by you to the woman you love? There is somewhat of a sneer in the question, Captain Rollo, and you might have spared me that. Suppose, now, that I had committed to your charge the most warm and ardent messages of love, fidelity, and so forth; would they have been welcome to your ears? would they have been pleasant to your memory? would they have been faithfully, and without diminution, conveyed to Ernestine?"

"They would have been pleasant neither to my ear nor to my memory," I replied; "yet, on my honour, I would have conveyed them faithfully to her."

"Acknowledge, however, that you asked for what you had no wish to hear."

"I confess that I did."

"Then, be assured, I have no such messages to send to Ernestine. For her I have indeed a true and tender love; but only such as I have for her sister—or as a father or brother might have for them both. Count Rupert is one of my oldest and earliest friends. He was my tutor and patron under Mansfeldt and Sir John Hepburn in the Flemish war. He would gladly see us more nearly and dearly connected than by the mere ties of comradeship, but that can never be; and Ernestine, with whom rumour has so often done me the honour to link my name, knows that well—though she knows not the reason why."

These words filled me with joy; for Kœnigshausen had so much

that was brilliant and fascinating about him, that, had we both assailed the heart of Ernestine at the same time, I fear me much that the poor captain of Scottish musketeers might have had but a poor chance of success when competing with the accomplished noble of the German empire.

"The reason—the reason," he continued, muttering under his thick mustaches: "Ah—Christi Creutz be about me!—if she, or thou, or he knew it, how you would all shrink from me!"

This was scarcely spoken—yet we heard it; and the priest bent his keen grey eyes on the count, whose gaze was lowered on the mane of his horse; for the memory of years long past was rising before him, and his thoughts were turned inward.

"Let us change the subject," said the Jesuit, bending over his mule towards me; "the gloomy fiend is uppermost, and his dark thoughts are upon him."

Amid Kœningheim's forced gaiety, I had frequently perceived a melancholy enthusiasm; at times, his laugh would cease abruptly, and his brow would knit: then his eye became clouded, and his voice sad. What secret thought was this that preyed upon the soul of the naturally gay and gallant soldier, souring his manner, and prematurely silvering his dark and curly hair? I was perplexed and interested; but courtesy compelled me to conceal what I observed. Animated by the same feeling, and to change the conversation, the Jesuit told us a legend concerning St. Knud, which he had lately learned from the MSS. of an old brother of his order. It related to the adventures of his saint, when first he came thither to preach among the *Sclavi*, who of old inhabited all Holstein, which derives its name from *holt*, an ancient word for a forest, the whole promontory of Chersonesus Cimbrica being then covered by dense woods of pine and beech, extending from the Baltic to the Western Sea.

Marvelling sorely at the wildness of the country and its inhabitants, St. Knud came to a place where there was a little green valley between two hills, which were covered to their summits by foliage, and there a little figure suddenly approached him.

Unlike the painted *Sclavi*, who were naked, or clad only in the skins of bears, and armed with bows and spears of flint, the *mannikin* wore a grey doublet with large horn buttons, and an enormous red cap, which was nearly three feet in diameter, though he was barely two feet in height. He had a large and solemn visage, a long hooked nose, a back with a prodigious hump, and a heavy paunch; he carried a flute about twice the length of himself, whereon he began to play melodiously at the approach of the saint, who, on hearing the music, felt his feet beginning to trip; and had he not signed the cross in time

nathless his sacred character, his palmer's gown which had lain for a time in the holy sepulchre, his staff which had been cut on Mount Calvary, and his escallop from the shores of Galilee (for St. Knud had just returned from Jerusalem), he would have been compelled to dance like all who heard the fairy music of this grotesque little gnome, who was king and liege lord of all the Trollds in Denmark.

On beholding the sign of the cross, the Trolld stamped his little foot with rage, and broke his immense flute into a hundred pieces, all of which vanished with a shrill sound.

"By that sign, I know thou shalt conquer!" said the imp, passionately.

"Who art thou that knowest this?" asked St. Knud.

"I am called Skynde, king of the Trollds," said the mannikin, under his enormous mustaches, which, with his beard, resembled a frozen waterfall, "and I am come to meet thee in the name of all the underground people, whom thy coming hath alarmed; and we hope to sign a peace or truce with thee, that we may not be driven out of this pleasant land, where we have dwelt since the waters of the flood subsided, and permitted us to crawl out of the crannies of the great ark—yea, ages before the days of Dan, son of Humble—ages before the Cimbri, the Goths, or the Jutes had a name, or came beyond the green rampart of the Danesvark. We are kind and benevolent to all who do not molest us; but savage and revengeful to those who do. Your Maker is also ours, for when he created men, he also made the happier little Trollds, and a thousand other spirits which such gross eyes as thine cannot see; but if thou wilt pray to this good Master for us—but not against us—we will never molest thee, nor thy servants, nor followers, even unto the end of time."

Then the saint promised that he would pray every day for the little Trollds of the land; and thereupon King Skynde threw up his red cap with joy, and again stamped with his feet. Then two little imps, each about a foot in height, bare-armed and bare-legged, with leathern aprons, and beards descending to their knees, and all begrimed with smoke and dust (for they had just ascended from some fairy forge far down in the bowels of the earth), appeared, bearing between them a large goblet of gold, and, staggering under its weight, with their leathern aprons they gave a last polish to the magnificent chasings which adorned it, and, scrambling down a mole-track, disappeared.

"Brother Knud," said the elfin king, with grave majesty, as he placed his hand upon the edge of the cup, which was higher than his girdle, "take this goblet; it is one of thousands made by my smiths; keep it for the first church you build in Holstein;

and rest assured, while it remains in the land of the Sclavi, thy good people shall never be molested by the Trollds."

"This cup," continued the priest; "or one said to be it, is still shown in the convent of St. Knud at Eckernfiörd; and, whether it be the fairy goblet or not, we must acknowledge that never did mortal hands frame a more magnificent chalice."

Father Ignatius had just reached this point in his story, when, as we passed Kiel on our left, his eye observed the human figure still dangling from the lofty spire, with the crows flying in circles round it. With some asperity, he asked the count what this display meant; and Kœningheim, who long before this had recovered his equanimity of mind and calm intrepidity of manner, replied briefly—

"A Dane, whom we strung up as you see, for guiding a night attack."

The priest expressed great indignation at this unnecessary barbarity.

"Count, count!" said he, "I could have expected better things from you."

"Nay, good father," he replied, "do not chide me for this. Condemned by a court-martial, the man was hanged by our provost, who may have exceeded his duty by hanging him higher than usual. But you may order him to be interred the moment you enter Kiel."

Saying that such ferocities disgraced the armies of the Empire, the priest bade us adieu, and, whipping up his mule, turned off towards Kiel, and his tall figure was long visible as he threaded his way between the neglected fields; for the poor Holsteiners, being doubtful who might reap, were omitting to till or sow their fertile land in many places.

Had he continued with us, the priest would have had fresh cause for indignation; for when with our four dragoons we entered Lytjenbürg, which a regiment of Imperialists had just quitted, we found one of the magistrates hanging by the neck in the market-place. Here, as elsewhere in Holstein, there stood a bronze figure of Justice, having a sword in one hand, with a rod in the other; and, to a hand of this figure, a lieutenant-colonel of Tilly's Croatian horse had appended the burgomaster for some real or imaginary insult.

Notwithstanding the rage and horror this had excited among the people, Kœningheim, who was a daring and reckless fellow, rode right through the town (which is one of the most ancient in the duchy), and halted at the door of an inn which bore the sign of *Wildbrat*, the famous dog of Christian I., which proved more faithful than all the king's courtiers, and thus gave a name and motto to the noblest of Danish orders. Dinner was ordered,

and promptly served up, with the best of Rhenish, Neckar, and Moselle, the former being nearly ninety years old at least, so it was averred by the host, who had not the least idea that he was ever to be paid for the good cheer he was providing. In that however, he was mistaken, for Kœningheim—an honourable soldier of fortune—paid like a prince; and, after giving refreshments to the four dragoons who had kept guard at the door, we again set forth, and, just as darkness was closing, came in sight of King Christian's outposts by the Kielerfiôrd.

The sun had set, enveloped in clouds; there was no moon visible; the cold grey sky had gradually become an inky black one, and the level shore with its bordering woods was shrouded in dusky obscurity; but within cannon-shot of it the Danish fleet were lying at anchor. One mile from the shore, on advantageous ground, the king had formed a strong redoubt, banked up with earth and palisades, mounted with cannon, and garrisoned by a thousand men under his own immediate orders. These men consisted of my own regiment and three companies of Dutch. His fleet protected them on the seaward, and their cannon and situation on a hillock rendered it inaccessible from the landward. On the road to Kiel, and in other directions, he had posted outguards, and perdues were scattered beyond them.*

From the summit of a knoll over which the roadway wound, and between two thickets of trees, which, together with the darkness of the night, completely concealed us, we could distinctly perceive, far down in the hollow, between us and the redoubt, a guard of soldiers bivouacked round a watch-fire.

Thanking Kœningheim for his kind escort, and expressing regret that I did not possess even a tester to give his dragoons, that they might have a can of Rostock beer on their return, I now begged that he would leave me, being so near my comrades that I could reach them in perfect safety, while to him the vicinity was full of peril. He assented to this, and, after looking at the outpost through his Galileo glass, handed it to me, and I was glad to perceive by it that the soldiers around the watch-fire belonged to my own regiment.

By the red glow which the blazing fire shed on the green trees of an adjacent wood, and the grassy meadow beyond, I could perceive my brave comrades standing in groups, with their steel accoutrements glittering, or rolled in their tartan plaids, and resting on the sward between their piles of arms; while far in front, upon the roadway, were two advanced sentinels, standing motionless and still as they leaned against their pikes, the points of which glittered like red stars in the light of the wavering fire.

"Now farewell, Kœningheim," said I, dismounting, and hand-

* Out-picquets, with advanced sentinels.

at the bridle of the horse I had ridden to one of the dragoons for it belonged to the German cavalry): "on foot I can reach the outpost. Remember to perform all you have promised for the rescue of our poor Gabrielle, and thus complete the kindness of a day which I shall never forget."

"By the way," said he, "did you not tell me that you were without money? My purse is at your service. Take it, Captain Lollo, for one cannot have too much of that ware."

I was about to decline, when a sound that came from the thick underwood which surrounded the knoll, made us pause. Kœningheim stooped his head to listen, and the four German roopers blew the fuses of their musketoons.

"A passing wind has rustled the branches," said Kœningheim, shortening his reins.

"Nay," said I, whose Highland ear had been practised in my native forests to every casual sound; "it was the footsteps of men—for I heard the crackle of decayed wood and withered leaves."

"Then we are too long here," replied Kœningheim, wringing my hand with honest warmth; "farewell!—I will remember all you have said, and all you wish."

"Ready!" cried a voice among the trees; "guard pass—resent—give fire!"

"Christ! Creutz!" cried Kœningheim, as a volley of six muskets streaked with red fire the dark bosom of the coppice, and, struck by six deadly shots, the count and his four German dragoons fell heavily on the turf, while their affrighted horses dashed down the knoll and disappeared. One dragged his rider a considerable way. Then I heard a wild Highland *straigh*, and lieutenant Diarmed Macgillvray of Drumnaglas, with a patrol of six musketeers, surrounded me.

I cannot express the grief and indignation this occurrence excited within me. With my own hand I could have slain Drumnaglas, had he not given me a warm embrace, and welcome back—as he said—to life and liberty; and had I not been aware that he mistook the count's escort for a reconnoitring party or patrol of the Imperialists, with a Scottish prisoner whom it was his duty to free; and, with the most perfect Highland *sang froid*, he turned over the slain, one after the other, and shook them, saying—

"Tead—tead as a herring, too—Got pless us!"

The count still breathed, but a ball had passed through his breast, beating into the wound a portion of his cuirass and buff coat; thus he suffered the most excruciating agony. But as I still hoped he might live, I desired the Highlanders to cross their steel muskets, and, with their plaids laid over the barrels, to

a temporary bier, on which we conveyed him, groaning heavily and bleeding profusely, to the out-guard, where M'Coll of that ilk commanded, and from thence to the sconce, where the regiment received me as one who had indeed returned from the dead; for Ian and all the officers had most respectable knots of black crape on their sword-hilts and left arms, in honour of my memory. Even the standard-poles had the same grim livery, which was very gratifying to me, as men have seldom an opportunity of beholding the respect paid to their memory when defunct.

"Tell me, Ian," said I, when the congratulations had a little subsided, "has Ernestine heard the rumour of my death?"

"She believes you to be a prisoner in Kiel."

"And these confounded badges of crape—for whom does she believe they are worn?"

"For the Duke of Pomerania, as I told her."

"But old Bagislaus IV. is not dead."

"It matters not—his name was the first that occurred to me."

"Ah! pray, Ian, go—or send some one to say that I am safe—that I am here, and in a few minutes will be by her side."

"Dioul! why not go yourself?"

"I dread the excess of joy——"

"Excess of joy never killed any one, whatever excess of grief may do. Ah! if you only loved yourself half so well as you love this dark-eyed woman——"

"Or as you love Moina," retorted I; for Ian, though he really admired Ernestine, and considered it a duty to love her as his own kinswoman, had never been altogether able to overcome his first prejudices against her foreign taint, as he called her German accent and her Spanish blood.

"Moina dwells by Kilchiuman," said he, "and her eyes have never looked on other hills than those whose shadows darken the waters of the Oich and Garry. Moina is a daughter of the old race; she has no foreign blood in her veins, or strange accents on her tongue."

"But Ernestine is your natural-born kinswoman, and Moina is *not*."

"My kinswoman!—well, so she is—blood is warmer than water, and by the Cairn na cuimilhe!" said he, tossing up his bonnet, "I would march to the cannon's mouth for her; but it is a devil of a pity her mother was a stranger—a Spaniard."

"Nay, I think it has been a great improvement on the old Rollo blood; for I am sure that two such beautiful dark eyes were never seen in the old tower at Cromartie; but while we chatter here like a couple of pyets, poor Kœningheim is enduring, I fear me, the agonies of death."

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE DYING SOLDIER.

THE count had been conveyed on board of the *Anna Catharina*, where Dr. Pennicuik examined his wound, and at once declared him to be past all recovery.

As I have much to relate, instead of impertinently thrusting any more love scenes before the reader, I must beseech him or her to imagine all my meeting with Ernestine, and to believe that the keen sense of joy which the poor girl experienced on beholding me again, was considerably abated and tempered by the terrible plight in which her father's oldest and best friend was brought on board of the king's ship.

Phadrig knocked at the cabin door, and with the most soldier-like unconcern announced that the count was dying, and required my presence. Ernestine burst into tears, and threw herself upon her knees to pray, while I hurried along the lower deck (breaking my shins against stray shot, coils of rope, and buckets of radding) to reach the poor and comfortless berth, in which one of the bravest spirits that ever endued with life a Scottish breast was hovering between Eternity and Time.

As I went into the little cabin, the doctor was coming softly and slowly out, with the air of a man who could do no more. His sleeves were tucked up, and his hands were covered with blood.

"Doctor!" said I; he shook his head, and passed on.

Swinging by a rusty chain from a beam of the main deck, an iron lamp lighted the scene I am about to describe. Its smoky and sickly radiance shed a wavering and yellow gloom on the loping walls of dark Memel wood, the strong transverse beams, the knotty planks, and iron bolts of the ship; on the brass culerins, which were laid alongside the closed ports, the rammers, ponges, and other *et cetera*, beside them; and on the poor pallet spread on the cabin floor, whereon lay Kœningheim, breathing feebly; his features ghastly, and sharpened by pain and loss of blood, and contrasting by their pallor with the blackness of his mustaches and hair, the long cavalier locks of which were cattered over the pillow like those of a girl. His eyes were closed. His fine manly neck and breast were bare, save where the latter was crossed by a bandage, from beneath which the blood was oozing.

Several officers were standing near; Danes in red dresses; Dutchmen in yellow; and two of ours—these were Kildon and Mulcraigie, who were as soldier-like as their weatherbeaten visages, grizzled beards, and picturesque costume—steel cuirasses

and buff coats laced with silver—could make them. They stood placidly waiting until the poor Scoto-Imperialist should die.

Though I trod lightly, his ear detected the sound as I entered and knelt down by his side.

"Ah!" said he, opening his eyes; "it is you—I had almost forgotten: but for this exquisite agony I could imagine that a sleep was coming over me. It is the sleep, Rollo—the drowsy sleep—of death!"

I took his hand in mine; alas! it was cold and clammy.

"Count Kœningheim, you wished to speak with me."

"I have something to tell you," said he; "something which I do not wish others to hear."

I looked at Kildon and the group who stood with him; they immediately retired on tiptoe, and closed the cabin door. I was left alone with the dying man, who seemed to be considerably relieved by their absence, and said—

"I will see them all once more; but give me that cup again—the wine-and-water—thank you."

The draught revived him, and he said with a bitter smile—

"After all my fighting and all my battles, I die in my bed, like other people."

"Scarcely, Kœningheim, with that frightful wound."

"I was not always, as you may suppose, Albert Count of Kœningheim," said he, with an effort, and a voice that trembled. "At home, in that dear land I never more shall see, I was but Habbie Cunninghame of the Boortree-haugh, a name which many in the north of Scotland must remember—but, alas! with abhorrence and reprobation. Yet, if you knew all, you would pity me."

He paused, and seemed to be gathering his thoughts; and, as he did so, an expression of dark despair and agony stole over his beautiful face—for it *was* beautiful in its supreme manliness.

"You may know what it is to feel love, and I have felt it, too—and rage and hatred; but you can never have known what it is to feel, as I now do, the horrors of remorse. Oh, may you never, never know it!" He grasped my hand convulsively, and fixed upon me his dark and agonized eyes. "I would rather wish that even my worst enemy should die, than do as I have done—and endure what I have endured! Never until this hour have I told my secret to any one; it has been locked in my own breast. I have had none to whom I could confide it, or in whose presence I might without shame shed a tear. Laughter, sleep, drunkenness, the bottle, anything was welcome, that would make me forget myself; for to be in solitude—to be left for one moment to reflection—was to be in—horror! and thus for thirty years I have borne grief, rankling like a poisoned arrow in my heart."

"Can this be the lion-hearted soldier of the Empire!" thought I.

"I am a murderer—I have been an assassin!" said he, in a low and terrible whisper; "do you not shrink from me?" His eyes closed, for they were full of tears, and thus he did not see the startled expression of my face. "Tears—tears! oh, that they fell on *her* grave! but do not shrink from me," he continued. "(I feel your hand relaxing.) I deserve your pity rather than your scorn. Ah, yes!—if you knew all—if you only knew all! I have been bad—I have been passionate—wilful—obstinate—imperious! but not for many a long, long year."

"Do not, I beseech you, add to the agonies of the present, by recalling the bitterness of the past."

He was sinking rapidly; the slow, heavy, and painful effort of respiration increased; his lower jaw quivered at times, and then his eye remained fixed, even when he was addressing me. Never, but in the eyes of the dying, is that wild, imploring, and unearthly glance visible. They seemed larger than usual; brighter and more glistening. On closer examination, I was surprised to find that, since the shot had struck him, he looked much older. Since yesterday his hair had actually become grizzled, and his whole aspect was that of a man bordering on fifty years of age.

"Is it not strange," said he, "that all the old Scottish prayers my poor mother taught me when a child—prayers which I have never remembered since—are crowding on my mind to-night, and hovering on my tongue, with many of her pious and simple thoughts, just as if her voice had uttered them yesterday, though the flowers of thirty summers have bloomed upon her grave? Those prayers, to me so meaningless when I was a *wee an' wifely* *ot*, find a terrible echo in my heart to-night——"

"Sensibility," said he, after a long pause, "is often a source of the deepest unhappiness. I have eaten and drunken; I have sung and roistered among my comrades—and that passed for *sirih*, for they knew not my inner heart, and the source of secret sorrow within me. I have often been glad to escape from present thought by rushing into revelry, leaving to the future those mental reproaches that revel was sure to cost me. . . . I can now look back with pity and contempt on that devil-may-care exterior, which threw a thin veil over my remorse."

He paused frequently, and his voice sometimes died away; but the night wind, which blew through a chink of an adjacent apartment, reanimated him from time to time.

"Oh! in an hour like this, how awful it seems to see behind me the remembrance of a life misspent, and before me the dim and shadowy future—the horrors—the ages—the uncounted ages—"

of eternity ! Oh, yes !" he continued, in a voice that was weaker, and broken by many a convulsive sob ; " the assumption of a reckless military character humiliated me. Ernestine—poor Ernestine ! when I am no more, and she has read these papers, will see how unworthy I have been of the honour her good father intended for me."

With hands that trembled, and frequently failed in their office, he drew from his breast a small horn case about three inches square. It was suspended to his neck by a slender chain of steel ; and, opening it, he showed me that it was a book, containing some thirty-five or forty pages, closely filled with writing in a small and distinct hand.

" Take this," said he ; " it is the story—the sad secret—of my life. It is, moreover, a memorandum of all I possess, which I leave equally between Ernestine and Gabrielle. I have three estates, two in poor old Scotland (the best blessings of God and Saint Andrew be on it !); I have a third at Vienna ; but I am the last of my race, and have left these girls, whom I have loved as sisters—all—everything !"

He gave me the volume, which was stained with his blood (and had been bruised by the death-shot in its passage through his breast), and then sank back exhausted. A violent shivering passed over his features ; I thought he was about to expire, and was hurrying to summon aid, when he rallied, and again begged (what he had thrice before implored) that a Catholic clergyman might be brought to him ; but there was no such person to be found either on board the *Anna Catharina*, or within cannon-shot of the Danish posts. This was a source of terrible affliction to poor Kœnigheim, who belonged to the ancient faith ; and his moans of mental agony were greater than those conducted by the pain of his wound.

After being informed by the weeping Ernestine that all hope of obtaining a priest was over, he never spoke again, but expired just as the ship's bell uttered the first stroke of midnight.

It was a scene that I shall long remember :—the yellow gleam of the murky lamp that swung from the deck above ; the grim and comfortless cabin, with its starboard cannon ; the blood-stained pallet, and the grim corpse that lay upon it, stiffening into the cold, white, and marble rigidity of death. No near or dear hand was there to do the last act of kindness, so his eyes were closed by me. On her knees near the pallet was Ernestine, in tears and prayer—young, beautiful, and with many years before her ; while the remains of that gallant and noble, but unhappy and remorse-stricken man, were now only a breathless piece of clay.

To draw Ernestine away from this sad scene ; to occupy her

and; to gratify my own anxiety and curiosity to learn the story of poor Kœningheim, that crime—the terrible memory of which had haunted him through life, which had clouded the brilliancy of his achievements and the splendour of his rank, shedding a horror and a bitterness over his dying hour—I led her into the great cabin, which the royal kindness of Christian had surrendered to her use; and there, after the pause of an hour or so, we examined together the little manuscript book, and read it by turns; for I had but a short time to tarry, as honour and duty required that I should repair to my colours, and command my company in the redoubt upon the shore.

Written as sudden impulses of thought inspired, and in detached pieces, but written with the faint hope that it might fall to the hands of some kind comrade or pitying friend, the little secret manuscript of Kœningheim (or Halbert Cunninghame) was very remarkable—and to me interesting—production; but as the story might seem incoherent as he narrated it, I have told it here partly in my own way, and have used the second person, whereas he wrote in the *first*. The chances that it would never have met a human eye, were as a hundred to one; for it might have been plundered from him on some field of battle by a dead-ripper, or have been buried with him there; and then the secret of his life would have been hidden with him in his bloody and unknown grave.

Much that he relates is part of our Scottish history.

His account of the battle of Glenlivet is among the most succinct and correct I have seen; and, to preserve the unity of the whole, I have placed the secret history of the count in the Tenth book of my narrative, instead of an appendix, as I first intended. It shows the terrible circumstances by which he was forced to leave his native country, and seek service and shelter in foreign countries—and, as an outlaw and outcast, to change even his name, lest some of the many Scotsmen who, as soldiers of Fortune, followed the great princes of the German war, might discover him, and remember the dark blot by which, in a fatal moment of recklessness and passion, he had brought ruin and dishonour upon an ancient race and venerated name.

CHAPTER LXV.

COUNT KœNINGHEIM'S STORY—THE LILY OF CULBLEINE.

Two kirkyards in Scotland are more solemn or pleasing in aspect, or more romantically situated, than that of Logie, which is four miles from the river Dee, in the parish of Logie-colstaine, Aberdeenshire. It once surrounded the kirk of St. Woloc,

the bishop and confessor ; but every vestige of that ancient fane has now disappeared from the little mound of rich holm-land that rises above the small hills and broad muirs of the district, and from the bosom of which flows a miraculous spring, called the Poldow, which yet enjoys a high reputation among the peasantry, for the cures it has wrought since the days when the good bishop blessed it, and rested from his pious labours in Strathdon, Balvenie, and Mar.

On the holm of Logie Kirk, the mouldering tombs, the old headstones—green with moss, or half sunk among the long dog-grass and broad-leaved dockens—the hedges, that in summer are white with blossoms of the fragrant hawthorn, and one old gnarled yew, are all indicative of its being an ancient burial-ground. Here and there a broad throchstone, resting on four stunted balusters, spotted by grey lichens, and covered with letters half defaced by mischief or by time, yet remain to indicate where some valiant Knight of Cromar or Laird of the Garioch are lying ; while the almost flattened mounds, the small round headstones with unpretending and unlettered fronts, taken perhaps from the bed of the adjacent burn, remain to show where many a shepherd, patient, poor, and God-fearing, and many a brave forester of Culbleine, who hacked and hewed, burned and shot, as his laird or leader commanded him ; harrying the lands of the Gordons to-day, and besieging the towers of the Leslies to-morrow—with many a bien bonnet laird, stern in purpose, unflinching as Brutus, and true to Scotland's kirk and king—yea, true as the steel of his good broadsword—are mouldering, or have mouldered into dust.

Rest them, God !

On the green velvet bank which slopes up from a little tributary of the Davinloch—a place where the winter grass grows rank, but where the white daisies spot the summer turf—are two long gravestones lying side by side, and somewhat apart from all the rest.

They cover the graves of two lovers.

Every person who passes through Cromar (as that part of Aberdeenshire is named) is taken to see them, for there is a sad story connected with them—a story which, to this hour, throws an occasional dash of sentimentality over the village girls and bonneted ploughmen, and which was long the theme of many a sad and many a dirge-like song. One of those stones was inscribed with a legend which I cannot give here, as Keeningheim's handwriting became so tremulous as to be illegible. On the other is carved a Scottish sword, with the words :

Their Epis Kenneth Logie—ane bonrabill man.

The history of these sequestered tombs, is the history of Leningheim's misfortunes and his crime.

In the sixteenth century, nearly the whole property of the now suppressed parish of Logie, in Mar, belonged to two families, the Gordons of Colstaine, and the Donaldsons of Culbleine—a vast forest. The dwelling of the former, named the Moat of Colstaine, was a strong square fortalice, surrounded by a barbacan wall, which stood in the midst of a morass, not far from the little kirkyard holm which I have just described. A river (now shrunk to a runnel) washed this barbacan on one side; a wet ditch defended it on the other.

The residence of the Donaldsons was an old Scottish manor-house or Place, having grated windows with loop-holed sills, vaulted apartments, and turrets at the angles. It stood among some fine old sycamores and oaks, on the moorland; and now my reader's eye may rest on the three leading features of the parish of Logie, as they appeared in the year of grace 1594; the grey old kirke of St. Woloe, with its graves dotting the green holm, a buttressed wall begirt with hawthorn hedges, and shaded by dark yew-trees, where the glod croaked by day and the owl screamed by night; lower down on the waterside, the strong tower, with its broad chimneys and stone roofs, its grated casements and corbelled rampart; the great *dule-tree* before its gate—an ash that was seldom without its "tassel," in the shape of a thief from the south, or a Forbes hung in his boots, as the good people phrased it then; the old baronial manor on the lea, half hidden among dark green copsewood, with the smoke of its hall and spence, kitchen, bake and brew houses ascending into the air.

In those days, the minister of the Kirk, the gudeman of the Place, and the laird of the Tower, were the three undoubted dignitaries of the parish; and when we remember that it was an age when the minister was (in his own estimation) a greater man than ever Cardinal Beaton dared to be; when the gudeman brought four-and-eighty horsemen, "weel boden in effeir of war," to the sheriff's quarterly weaponshow; and that the laird marched thrice that number, and had, moreover, the power of sending half the country-side to pit or gallows,—it must be allowed that the power of these three potentates in 1594, was infinitely greater than that enjoyed now by the Premier Duke of Scotland.

Let us go back twenty years.

In the year 1574, when our story opens, the family at the Tower consisted of the Lady Marjorie and her son, a boy of five

or six years of age. His father had been seized by one of those fits of wandering, which so frequently possessed the Scottish noblesse of that and after times ; and, with two hundred stout pikemen, he had joined the Border legion of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh, and died in his armour, fighting—not for religion, as the laird, honest man ! cared very little about that, but for honour and glory—on the walls of Namur. Some domestic quarrel—a sudden fit of spleen at his lady—was urged in the parish as the reason of his departing from his quiet little tower among the moors of Cromar, to fight the ferocious Spaniards under Ferdinand of Toledo ; for though Dame Marjorie was a staunch Catholic (being a daughter of Halbert Cunninghame, of the Boortree-haugh, in Glencairn), the laird had heard Knox preach in his youth, and thought he was a Calvinist. Thus it was a dreich and doleful day, when a startled servitor of the Tower announced in the morning that a branch had been found at the foot of the dule-tree which overshadowed the gate.

Whenever a Gordon of Colstaine died, this old tree, like the oak of Dalhousie, dropped one of its loftiest branches.

There was sore mourning in the solitary tower, for by that mysterious warning the lady knew she was a widow, and that the father of her little boy had fallen, fighting against her faith and the creed of his ancestors ; but for many a month no certain tidings came from that land, which has been so often the grave of the Scottish soldier, until Jock of the Cleugh, a pikeman who had followed the laird, came limping up to the barbican gate, with a light purse and heavy heart, and a tattered doublet, to tell Lady Marjorie how he had been one of that brave Border band, who had laid her husband in his narrow bed before the gate of Sainte Alban.

Old Jock of the Cleugh went no further than the Moat of Colstaine ; for he deposited his crutches by the hall-fire, and from thenceforward became one of the principal personages in the household, though he spent his whole time in drinking usquebaugh, flourishing his staff, and rehearsing tales of the laird's prowess and his own, and the valiant deeds of the Scottish Borderers, the bulwark of Flanders and terror of the Spaniards. He taught the stable-boys many a point of farriery they had never known before, and the trenchermen many a trick with the dice, by which, however, they always lost, and he always won ; but he showed them how to pick the lock of the butler's pantry, to broach wine-casks without drawing the spigot ; to train hawks, and to tell fortunes on cards ; but his principal pupil was young Halbert Gordon, the son and heir of his umquhile leader. Partaking less of his mother's gentle nature than his father's lofty spirit, the boy was froward, pas-

ionate, and bold; and thus, by the time he was ten years of age, ock of the Cleugh, who found him an apt scholar, had quite unfitted the little fellow for living a quiet life, or adopting a peaceable avocation.

He had taught him to ride the wildest horses in the barony ithout bridle or saddle, and at full speed; he had taught him to handle a sword twice the length of himself, and to discharge deadly shot, with arblast or arquebuse—to scour armour, sharpen blades, cast bullets, and make up bandoliers of powder. but there were many other features in the education acquired from this wooden-legged preceptor, which were more exception-ble; for he learned to drink “to a bluidy war,” in a tass of aw usquebaugh, without once winking; to make faces at Mr. owlar during sermon, to steal his apples, and shoot his hens; to “cock his eye” at the dairymaid, and swear a few round oaths in High Dutch or Low Country Spanish, which had the double dvantage of being more expressive than our plain Scottish, and as expensive, being evasions of the act by which swearers and anners come under the claws of the kirk-session; in short, under he tutelage of this old, one-legged and one-eyed, red-visaged, ard-drinking, swearing and storming veteran of the Flemish wars, young Halbert Gordon grew up a little desperado; and, as he increased in years, his ferocious disposition, and dangerous kill in using his hands, made him the aversion of all the young birds, his companions, and a source of secret fear to all the little idies in the neighbourhood.

The family of Donaldson at the Forest, consisted also of a widow, whose husband had left her with one daughter, the eiress of the old manor and all its pertinents. With her there also dwelt the son of a deceased sister, little Kenneth Logie, a poor and penniless orphan, who had no home save that which his ind aunt offered him; for his father, a ruined laird of Cromar, ad fallen in a raid between the Earl of Mar and the Forbeses.

Isolated as those widows were in that sequestered district, here was no intercourse between them, and no community of eeling. The lady of the Moat was a strict Catholic, though her usband had fought against the gory banner of the *Castigador* f Flanders. In her girlhood, she had heard Abbot Quentin Kennedy preach; and her father had seen the body of the great ardinal, hung naked and bleeding from the battlements of St. Andrew’s.

The lady of the Forest, the widow of umquhile John Donaldson, was a rigid Calvinist, and looked upon all Catholics with due version—gave the lady of the moated Tower the utmost possible ace when they met at the weaponshows, the burrow-town market, or on the horseway, lest their fardingales should touch;

for each thought there was more than mortal contamination in the person of the other. The Calvinist was "a heretic," the Catholic "an idolater;" and yet the poor for thirty miles round were wont to aver, that two women more beneficent, gentle-hearted, and amiable, within their own domestic circles, than the ladies of the Tower and Forest, could not be found in the kingdom of Scotland. The mischievous fulminations of the Reverend Maister Jowlar, the parish pastor, on one hand, and those of Father Ogilvie (a wandering priest of the Scottish mission), on the other, had left nothing undone to foster this unhappy state of local politics; and their adverse advices fanned the flames of discord, till the aversion and jealousy of the two brocaded and high-heeled dames extended downward through all their dependants. Thus we can compare the two estates of Colstaine and Culbleine only to two countries—a Catholic and a Protestant—in a state of watchfulness, and prepared for instant war. Very little would have brought the "heretics and idolaters" to blows; for if old Jock of the Cleugh, with his wooden leg, was ready to advance at the head of the Catholics, from the mosses and moorlands, on one side; the aged butler of Culbleine, who had shouldered a pike in 1559, and lost an eye at the memorable siege of Leith (fighting against M. d'Essé Epainvilliers, colonel-general of the French infantry in the service of the Scottish queen), was ready, on the other, to march at the head of the Calvinists. Thus it required all the terror of the sheriff and his deputies to keep peace in the parish between the rival powers. But there were three little personages in this community, who, for a time at least, had no share in those religious heartburnings.

These were the little heiress of the Forest, her cousin, Kenneth Logie, and Halbert Gordon of the Tower. When Lily Donaldson was ten, and the boys two years older, they had frequently met in their rambles, and by meeting became playmates. Little Lily had bright blue eyes, and fair hair; she was light, happy, smiling, and seemed like a beautiful fairy—though there never was a fairy so round, so noisy, and so full of fun and laughter. But Kenneth was a grave and quiet boy, with a mild eye and gentle voice, a pale and thoughtful brow.

Old people were wont to tap him on the head, and say he was like his mother.

Then Kenneth would bend his calm inquiring eyes on theirs, and wonder what like *this* mother was; for he had never known any other parent than the mother of Lily. Though their chance companion, Halbert Gordon (a dark-eyed and black-haired boy) was a model of strength and health, he was neither stronger nor healthier than Kenneth, but was more rash, proud, passionate, and resentful, than any boy in Cromar; and, as he rose in years,

those troublesome propensities waxed strong within him, and grew with his youth. When his haughty mother, or Jock of the Cleugh, desired him to finish his prayers by a malediction on "all obstinate heretics," he always made a mental reservation in favour of his secret friends at the Forest—fair Lily Donaldson, and her quiet cousin, Kenneth Logie.

Now it happens that the little people of this world will have their little love-dreams, as well as those who consider themselves men and women, but are only grown children after all; and thus a secret sympathy expanded in the hearts of little Kenneth and his pretty cousin—a sympathy which Lily's mother (who loved her dead sister's son as if he were her own) left nothing undone to fasten; and it strengthened fast this charming and childish love.

They were ever together, and were never known to quarrel. In that lonely pastoral district, all their amusements and objects were centred in each other; for, save the dark, sullen boy of the moated Tower, they knew no other companion, and even *he* was known to them only by stealth.

Kenneth had no secrets from Lily, and Lily knew neither wish nor hope, a sorrow or a joy, in which "cousin Kenneth" did not participate. They seemed to have but one heart between them. The garden of the Place, with its closely-clipped and gigantic yew hedges bordering grass walks (in the Scoto-French fashion), the fish-pond and the terraces, were the boundaries of the Eden they inhabited.

They knew of no land that lay beyond the blue hills of Strathdon, which seemed to them the verge of the habitable world. They indulged in visions, and what little people do not? Lily saw herself a great lady riding on a white palfrey, whose footcloth swept the ground; Kenneth saw himself the provost of a city—the general of an army—the laird of a noble barony—a belted earl, addressing the three estates in defence of the church, the laws, and liberties of Scotland. These airy castles faded away at nightfall, but were as brilliantly rebuilt in a thousand happy forms at their meetings next day. They were ever together, as we have said; and year after year, as it passed over their fair young brows, found them still wreathed with smiles.

The old lady of the Forest and the Lea, when she saw their curly heads nestling in the same plaid, would often bless them, and say,—

"My puir bairns, ye were just made for ilk ither."

And the old servitors of the Place loved to call them their "young laird and leddy—man and wife," and were wont to foretell that one day they would become so.

Then the little pair looked with wonder into each other's br'

eyes, marvelling what "man and wife" meant, but resolving that, whatever it *did* mean, they would not and could not love each other the less, or be less happy than they were; but would still hunt bees and butterflies, gather hare and heather bells, and make little chapels and houses in the green haughs, when the hawthorn bloomed in summer.

The round of their pleasures was small, and the *little chapel*—nathless the Reformation—was still a favourite amusement with the children of Scotland, as it is now with those of continental countries. Thus, a mimic altar was set up, with a cross and candles thereon; a circle of stones formed its precinct; Halbert Gordon was the officiating priest, and little Lily his whole congregation, and very devout she was; but without the circle of this baby chapel Kenneth Logie would stand doubtfully aloof, for his aunt and grim Master Jowlar had taught him to abhor such things, and, less compliant than the gentle Lily, he dreaded Catholicism as burned children dread the fire.

The banks of the kirk-burn, whose ceaseless waters came out of the distant woods, and whose far-off source was one of wonder to their infant minds, reflected every day their smiling faces as they wove fairy caps among the rushes, or set fleets of blue-bells floating down its current; but the bold young baron of the moated Tower led them elsewhere, for he showed Kenneth where the golden eagle and the dark osprey built their nests in the perpendicular rocks of Baud-kroskie; and where the fierce fumart nursed its red cubs among the ivy-covered holes, daring him to climb, with his dagger in his teeth, to rob the former and slay the latter.

Then, when Kenneth modestly declined, the reckless Gordon, with a triumphant glance at the little lady, and a laugh of scorn and derision, would clench his poniard in his strong white teeth, and grasping the weeds, the ivy, the rocks, or bushes, would ascend the steep cliffs like a squirrel, with the clouds and mist above, and the waters of the Dee flowing deep and dark below, while the two cousins held their breath with terror, as they watched him. Then the eagle would be seen to fly from its eyry with a shriek, and, torn from its bed, the nest would fall at the feet of Lily: or at times she was still more terrified by a fox or a fumart rolling down the rocks, drenched in its blood. Then came Halbert Gordon, descending with the rapidity of an evil spirit, with his cheek flushed and his eyes on fire, to laugh at Lily's terror and Kenneth's timidity; to exult in his own superior daring—to exhibit his bloody poniard, and say tauntingly—

"I will be a brave leal knight, even as my father was; but you, Master Kenneth, may weel become a monk, and snuffle Latin in Logie Kirk."

Though less rash and vindictive, Kenneth was a brave boy, so; and his heart swelled with secret passion at these open wounds. Thus, by degrees, the fierce little chieftain of the Tower learned to despise him, and, as their years increased, he took every opportunity of endeavouring to lessen Kenneth in the estimation of his cousin. The boys often quarrelled; but, boylike, they just as often became apparent friends again. Kenneth Logie respected and even loved Gordon for his bravery; but feared his proud and passionate temper. Gordon admired Kenneth's skill as a deadly shot with the arquebuse and pistolette, but despised his caution; while Lily instinctively loved her cousin, and feared her companion, though *he* loved her well, for her exceeding gentleness, her obliging disposition, and the grace with which she aided and did all those pretty nothings, which are as pleasing in the artless little girl as in the winning and well-bred woman.

Time passed on.

The boys became youths, both tall and strong; while the fair wild-bud that blossomed in the Forest of Culbleine, was daily unfolding some new charm as it expanded into beauty and bloom.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE COUSINS.—THE STORY CONTINUED.

MANY years had glided thus away.

The summer of 1594 was at hand. Kenneth Logie was then twenty years of age, and his cousin was two years younger. Kenneth, a handsome and athletic lad, excelled in all the manly sports and exercises necessary to complete the education of a Scottish gentleman. But Lily! The bud had become a rose, the pretty child a beautiful woman; mild and happy, merry or serious, by turns. Lily, in her eighteenth year, had indeed become the Lily of Logie—the Lily of the many songs in which her memory has been embalmed. Heaven never created a being more beautiful!

There are some women whom we admire for their dazzling skin; for their fine hair, or their sparkling eyes; for their dimpled hands, their handsome ankles, or their necks of snow; but in every point of form and feature fair Lily was admirable. She was one of those magnificent beings that appear but once in a century. She was then the wonder, as she is still the boast, of all Cromar and the Garioch.

Her violet-coloured eyes were soft and brilliant, but their shades were of the darkest brown; and her hair was of that bright

between asburn and gold, like the tress
 us, or to Scotland's martyred Mary. Her face
 small, but beautifully proportioned, and nothing
 more than the sound of her sweet voice; nothing
 more than the happy vivacity and brilliance of her
 eyes was full of pretty retort and merry repartee.
 Kenneth felt conscious that she was more than beautiful.
 He was supremely innocent and good; and he loved her
 depth of passion, which, as it was based on the
 feeling of security, knew no warp or interruption in a
 Though he still called her his "dear little wife,"
 he had, of course, come over them since he had first been
 to say so; for now the time approached when she was to
 be his—as he said—"his dear little bride in earnest."
 Kenneth Logie was, more than ever, all the world to Lily!
 To Halbert Gordon, she had never been intimately acquainted
 with any other man; and, though he was eminently handsome,
 there was a something in his air and in his aspect that made her
 shrink from the man still more than she had shrunk from the boy.
 Yet Halbert was not without many external graces; he had a
 swarthy cheek and a dark fierce eye, with a strong and well-knit
 figure. He carried a sword, which he used as if he had been born
 with it; he could ride the wildest horses, break the strongest
 lances, throw the heaviest hammers, and hit the most distant
 targets with the arrow or bullet; but there was a certain
 about him, somewhat between the soldier and the bravo, that
 Kenneth never cared to imitate. Being laird of the manor
 Tower, he was a lesser baron, and head of a branch of the house
 of Huntly, while poor Kenneth was but a penniless orphan, and
 in right of his future wife was destined to be merely the groomsman
 of Culbleine.

At county meetings, at weaponshows, at kirk or market
 wherever Halbert presented himself, with a falcon on his dexter
 thumb, a sword and dagger in his belt, a velvet mantle dangling
 on his left shoulder—his doublet covered with lace, his bombasted
 trunk-breeches and gold spurs, his bonnet slouched over his fierce
 and devil-may-care dark eyes—he enforced respect, and com-
 pletely overshadowed the less assuming, but assuredly not less
 brave, Kenneth Logie, who was inoffensive and quiet, as the other
 was offensive and quarrelsome. Gordon was rakish and libertine;
 so old Jock of the Cleugh had every reason to be satisfied with
 his pupil, whom he had trained up in the path which he thought
 most proper for a gentleman and soldier to pursue. Thus, in his
 twentieth year, Gordon's stormy and licentious manners, together
 with his fierce disposition, made him a terror and a proverb in
 the quiet and pastoral district of Cromar.

On occasional rides or chance walks, he never now saw the

Lily of Cufbleine; for, although the chimneys of their dwellings were visible from each other's windows, difference of faith, and certain dark rumours, political and religious, which were then floating through Scotland, made still wider that gulf between "Catholic and Presbyterian" which had always separated their mothers as aliens and enemies. In short, an armed insurrection of the Scottish Catholics, to co-operate with a Spanish invasion of England, and to avenge the murder of Queen Mary, was hourly expected; and James VI., with the Calvinists of the kingdom, were watchful and on the alert. Thus, Gordon, though he cared not a rush for religion or anything else when a pretty woman was concerned, was restrained from visiting as a man the scenes where he had played as a boy, for his haughty soul could not brook the idea of being an intruder. In a word, this wild gallant loved Lily as he hated Kenneth, with his whole heart and his whole soul.

A region of fierce and sudden impulses, his breast knew but two sentiments; for one cousin, love—for the other, hatred; and both these sentiments were the offspring of an indomitable pride. The jealousy of the sullen boy had become the settled hatred of the haughty man; and the age was one when the bold Scot owned no laws save those which the heart dictated and the sword enforced.

In the gloomy solitude of his mother's Tower he brooded over these things, and envied Kenneth the society of a being so beautiful and so winning; for he knew—to his agony—that the cousins were ever together, where whileom they had played in childhood—that they read the same books—that they had still but one heart and one soul between them. The children had grown up into lovers, and he knew that, to them, a third companion would be intolerable.

Full of bitterness as these thoughts swelled up in his fiery and resentful heart, he would leap on horseback and gallop towards the Forest or the Lea, in the hope of obtaining a glimpse of Lily; and when he did see her—

"A thousand furies!" he would exclaim, and abruptly turn his horse; "that puling ass is ever by her side!" Once he reined in his horse by the margin of the Dee, that it might drink of the gurgling stream. The place was beautiful. Cool and dark, deep and still, the river glided over its brown pebbles, and scarcely a sunbeam reached it through the thick foliage of that leafy glen, for overhead the trees entwined their branches like the arches of a vast cathedral; and the coo of the cushat-dove, or the voice of the maris, alone woke the echoing dingles. From gazing dreamily at the trout darting in the calm depth of the summer pool, the sound of voices made Gordon raise his head, and lo!

Kenneth Logie and his cousin Lily approached.

So full were they of themselves, and their own sweet conversation, that they never perceived Halbert, who, motionless as an equestrian statue, remained gazing at them with eyes that, like his heart, were full of fire. Fair Lily wore a dress of light blue silk, that charmingly became her bright and pure complexion; it had little white slashes, inlet at the shoulders; the wide and hanging sleeves displayed her dimpled elbows and the snowy whiteness of her arms; she carried her hood in one hand, the other rested on the arm of Kenneth; and her hair, which fell like a shower of gold upon her neck and bosom, swept over his shoulder, when at times their heads were bent together. The sunbeams, as they darted through the summer foliage, gave an additional lustre to her hair and eyes; and when she spoke or smiled, her mouth, from time to time, revealed the whiteness of her close and well-set teeth.

The handsome youth who walked by her side seemed fully worthy of this alluring girl, for his tall strong figure appeared to the utmost advantage in a suit of green velvet, laced with Venetian gold; a black feather drooped from his bonnet; he had a rapier in his belt and a falcon on his wrist. Another sat on the hand of Lily, and the lovers were laughing merrily as they flirted their birds, making them peck at each other, scream, and flap their wings; for an old chronicler tells us, that at the Scottish court he was considered the most finished gallant who could make his falcon play most tricks with the falcon of a lady.

Their thoughts were wholly of that nearer and dearer relationship which they were soon to bear unto each other; and as Lily bent her pure white brow towards Kenneth's sunburnt cheek, she said more than once—

"Oh, cousin Kenneth! are we not the happiest beings in the world?"

"In our love for each other, we are, dearest Lily!"

"In everything;" and Kenneth assented by a kiss.

Their conversation was made up of those little nothings which are so charming to lovers, but which will neither bear to be written nor rehearsed.

These were as molten lead to the heart of the unhappy Gordon; and when he saw Lily smiling with joyous confidence as her favoured lover painted many a vision of happiness to come, he felt that, with all his love—a love the stronger by its very hopelessness—he could have cursed her.

Like a vision they passed before him, and disappeared down a vista of the wood. His horse, which had raised its head as they passed, was again drinking placidly; the river was running on; the trees were rustling their green leaves overhead; but the miserable man remained as one entranced, and the sound of their

voices—one so charming, the other so hateful—seemed to linger in his ear long after they were gone.

So much were they absorbed in each other, that they had never once observed him; and his suit, which was of scarlet, laced with silver, was, he thought, assuredly conspicuous enough. Rage and fury filled his heart! But he had learned something of importance from their conversation as they passed, and on that information he resolved to act.

At six o'clock that evening, Lily Donaldson was to visit the mill of Newtown, on a mission of kindness to the miller's wife, who was suffering under a grievous illness; Kenneth was to meet her at the haugh by Deeside as she returned. Full of desperate and despairing thoughts, Gordon resolved to anticipate the lover, and forcing his horse across the stream, he urged it up the steep and wooded bank, where never horse or man had ascended before, and rode straight back to his Tower among the morasses.

The bridge was up and the gates were shut, and such were the precautions taken to prevent ingress and surprise that even he had some trouble in gaining admittance.

"What the devil is astir now—an English invasion? speak—thou—Jock of the Cleugh!" he said, angrily, on seeing that the whole place was in the hurry of warlike preparation; that the barbican was strewn with swords and lances; that twenty horses showed their barbed heads at their stable doors, as if chiding his delay; that every man in the Tower was busy in the furbishment of steel bonnets and corslets, or grinding pike-heads, sword-blades, and daggers.

"The Lords Argyle and Huntly are in arms," said Jock, in a low whisper, as he limped close to his master, "and sae the Grole o' the Garioch maun mount and ride, ye ken."

"Right, Jock! God's heavy malison be on him who lingers in joining the gay Gordons!"

"The cock o' the north for ever!" added Jock, flourishing his wooden leg.

The fierce heart of young Gordon leaped with joy at these tidings. He had long looked for them; "and now the hour had come, when he hoped," as he said, "to ride above his bridle in the blood of the accursed Calvinists," all of whom he embodied in the idea of Kenneth Logie. Ascending to the hall, which formed the first floor of the Tower, he found his stern and enthusiastic mother, excited by vengeful and religious hopes, in close council with Father Ogilvie, an itinerant priest of the Scottish mission, who, while encountering innumerable perils and the most severe poverty, travelled in disguise from one Catholic family to another. Garbed as a peasant, and looking like a buirdly farmer from the braes of Angus, in a canvas doublet and grey plaid, the priest

was covered with dust, and, by the mud on his gambadoes, seemed to have ridden both fast and far that day.

"Joy, my son Halbert—joy!" said his mother, while her eyes flashed fire.

"Welcome, my bairn!" said the priest, affectionately.

"So Huntly is in arms," said the young chieftain, with a kindling eye; "and is ready to sweep from Scottish ground the accursed brood of Knox and Calvin."

"Nay, my bairn," replied the old priest, "'tis Argyle who is in arms, with the Campbells, the Grants, and M'Gregors, 12,000 strong, and these are about to pour like a torrent down upon the Catholic lords. Thus, if all to whom the cross and the cause of Heaven are dear, delay to join Lord Huntly, the church of our fathers will sink even lower than Knox and Wishart levelled it."

"Halbert," said his mother, whose fierce spirit—for she was a borderer—snuffed blood from afar, "in three hours ye will have twenty horsemen in their harness, and prepared to march."

"'Tis well," he replied, through his clenched teeth, as he selected a sword and carbine from among the many that hung upon the wall; "but one word, good Father Ogilvie,—where is the Lord Huntly's trysting-place?"

"His castle of Strathbogie, in the Garioch."

"In three hours, then, mother, I will ride, to conquer or die, with our chief and our kinsmen."

There was a ghastly smile on Halbert's lips, and a deep and dire intent was visible in his dark eyes, as he proceeded with the utmost care to fix a match in his carbine, and hummed the while a surly song—

"When the Grole o' the Garioch
Meet the bowmen of Lord Mar;
Upon the hill of Bennochie,
The Grole shall win the war!"

Ha—ha! mother, does not the old song say so?"

"My brave boy, I see there is determination on your brow," said the stern matron, as she kissed her haughty son.

"Yea, madam," said he, grinding his teeth, and with a voice that made even her start; "victory, vengeance, and death are in my heart."

The trysting-place beside the Dee was a most sequestered spot. In all the windings of that beautiful river, by haugh and strath, there was not a lonelier. Among the dense summer foliage of the old beech-trees, around whose gnarled trunks the thick dark ivy clambered, the cushat-doves were still cooing, while the black mavis and the merry merle sang on their topmost boughs. Among rocks overhung by the clustering Gueldre roses, the sweetbriar and the fragrant honeysuckle, the deep blue Dee was

ring in tiny waves, that every rock and pebble fretted into little bells of foam; while, numerous as the stars of the sky, the yellow buttercups, the wild violets, and white gowans spangled the bright green grass on which the dew was falling thick and fast; for it was evening now, and the last rays of the sun were giving a farewell gleam on the clustered chimneys of the old mansion of Culbleine, and the older spire of Logie Kirk. The murmur of the gliding water, and the rustle of the shady ranches, the perfume of the summer flowers, the voices of the happy birds, and the partial glimpses of the evening sun, all combined to make beautiful the trysting-place where fair Lily was to meet her lover-cousin, as she returned from the mill of Lewtown.

On her arm hung a little basket, in which she had conveyed to her sick wife of the miller the various comforts and medicaments her good old lady her mother had so carefully prepared. Her hair, though fastened under her chin by a silver brooch, had fallen from her head, and permitted a shower of curls to fall over her shoulders—those golden curls, such as the early painters would have adored. There was a bloom on her rounded cheek, and exercise had imparted a rosy tinge to it, and a rich red to her smiling lip; while a clear light sparkled in her deep violet eyes, as she reached the place of tryst, and looked anxiously round for her lover.

"Kenneth!" she exclaimed, on seeing a tall cavalier leaning against the well-known tree, with a feather drooping over his eyes, and a mantle dangling over his left arm, which rested on the muzzle of a carbine; "dear Kenneth!"

He turned abruptly, and she beheld the olive face and dark glittering eyes of Halbert of the Tower.

"I am not Kenneth Logie," said he, courteously, raising his bonnet as he slightly kissed her hand; "may I hope that I am not the less welcome to fair Lily of the Forest?"

"Oh, no!" said she, concealing the terror with which his presence inspired her; "why should you be unwelcome? Are you not my old playmate, and, save Kenneth, the oldest friend I have known!"

Gordon stamped his foot at the name of his rival.

"And as your playmate in older and happier times, fair Lily, now come to bid you adieu; for I am going far from the woods of Logie and Culbleine, and all those scenes around which your presence casts a charm."

"For Flanders, where your poor father went before you?" he asked, with a mixed feeling between sorrowful interest and joy at this good riddance to the district; "to the wars of Low

“Nay—to wars certainly, but not so far off,” he replied, with a deep smile.

“And you came to bid me adieu, my poor old friend! It is so kind of you, Master Halbert; but,” she added, suspiciously, “how knew you that I should be here at this hour?”

“Surely it was intuition, Lily—some happy, some divine presentiment!” He paused, with something like confusion, and she glanced anxiously along the shady forest vista by which she expected Kenneth Logie to approach. Gordon drew off his long leather gauntlet, and took her soft small hand in his.

“He is going far away,” she thought, and did not withdraw it.

“Lily,” said he, “where I am going, and on what errand, matters not at present, for anon you will know all; but it is a mission of secrecy, of danger, and of death—one from which I may never return; and I could not leave these our native woods and glen, the hawthorn birks, and the bonnie brae of Logie, without saying how long, how well, and how deeply I have loved you—yea, loved you, Lily, from my boyhood upward. I cannot go forth, to die, perhaps, with this long-treasured secret in my heart. I could not fall in battle happily, and have it buried with me, unconfessed, untold, and unheard. I know all you would urge,” he added, sighing deeply, and speaking hurriedly; “Kenneth, your cousin—yes, yes—all say you love him; but such attachments should not be—they are within degrees forbidden by the church; moreover, I cannot believe it! Oh! think well of the love I have to offer. Kenneth is the penniless orphan of a dowerless bride, and a poor younger son. In this world he possesses nothing; I am a lesser baron, with an estate here and another in Glencairn—my mother’s inheritance. I can summon a hundred horsemen in time of need. The Lords of Badenoch, the Earls of Huntly and of Mar, have quartered their shields with mine; and in the storm which is at hand, when a sword may be in every Catholic hand, with its point at every Calvinist throat, you may find a worse protector than Halbert of the Tower; but nowhere in broad Scotland will ye find a better. Ponder, dearest Lily, over all I have said, for I must soon be gone, as time and tide will wait for no man.”

Lily trembled excessively: she became pale, and endeavoured to release her hand from Gordon’s; but his grasp tightened, and she struggled in vain.

“Think, think!” he continued; “think, Lily, from being the daughter of a bonnet-laird, a mere Gudeman of the Wood, I can make you a lady of that ilk, and on the nameless bestow one of the best names in all the brave north countrie.”

“Halbert Gordon,” replied Lily with some asperity, “my

her's name is as good as yours; and the wise Regent called him
 er his leal man and true in the Douglas wars."

"James Stuart—pho! a heretic and regicide!"

"He who speaks slightly of my father's friends involves my
 her's honour, and cannot love me," replied Lily, endeavouring
 free her hand."

"Thou wrongest me, and art unnecessarily angry, dearest Lily.
 mean not to slight the gudeman thy father's memory; but
 ou hast not yet answered me."

"Sir, I cannot answer while you detain me thus."

Gordon's dark eyes began to sparkle.

"You scorn me, then—you?"

"Nay, nay, Heaven forbid! but remember, that even if I could
 ve you—which is impossible—our religion—our religion! thou
 Catholic—I a Calvinist!"

Gordon uttered a bitter laugh.

"Fair Lily," said he; "a time is coming (yea, it is at hand!)
 hen such marriages will be as a boon from God to the accursed
 rood of Knox and Calvin—of Rough and Wishart; but once
 ore, dearest Lily, hear me——"

"Impossible—impossible!"

"I am going far away from these green woods, from Strathdon
 nd Strathdee, and I will have nothing of thee—of thee, I have
 ved so long to look upon. Give me but a tress, a ringlet, how-
 ver small; a riband, a glove—a rag, a shred—Oh, Lily, Lily!
 -if you knew how I have loved you!"

"Halbert Gordon, it is improper to give such a gift—and im-
 possible, too——"

"And why is it either improper or impossible?" he asked
 suddenly, confronting her with a cold and imperious aspect.

"Because," replied Lily, who trembled while she resented this
 ofty bearing,—"because my heart is no longer my own; and, oh,
 Halbert! you know that well."

Though this was quite the answer he expected, anguish
 listorted the brow and fury glared in the eyes of Gordon; for
 here was something intensely exasperating in hearing such
 n avowal from her own beautiful lips. His mouth was com-
 pressed, and his dark eyes regarded her fixedly with a gloomy
 scrutiny.

Footsteps were heard approaching, and the clear clank of
 Rippon spurs, that jangled as the wearer strode through the
 echoing glade. A joyful expression spread over the face of fair
 Lily; but a spasm shot through the heart of Gordon, for he knew
 that he was no longer wanted there, and that Kenneth Logie
 approached.

Unable to confront this young man otherwise than as an

enemy, and still more unable to endure his meeting with Lily, Gordon bestowed upon her a deep and inexplicable smile ; threw his carbine into the hollow of his left arm, and, crossing the Dee, though its waters came up to his waist-belt, sprang up the opposite bank, and disappeared among the thick coppice that covered it.

"Fie, cousin Kenneth!" said Lily, playfully, as she tapped him on the cheek with her pretty hand; "is it thus ye keep trust?"

Kenneth had been late in meeting her, and, as he had not seen Gordon when approaching, he proposed that they should seat themselves by the bank of the stream to converse a little; and, agitated as she had been by her recent painful interview, fair Lily gladly consented.

On the grassy brae, with the still water flowing at their feet, and the hawthorn spreading its white and fragrant branches above them, they conversed in low tones, with long pauses, for they were wrapped in the purest and dearest of dreaming. Lily soon forgot the terrible, the fixed regards of Halbert Gordon.

They knew not—those happy lovers—that from the opposite bank, and scarcely a pistol-shot distant, two fierce eyes were watching them.

I have said that Kenneth Logie was handsome, strong, and active; the bloom of twenty years was on his cheek, and his fine figure was displayed to advantage by the Scoto-French costume of the Lowlands. His blue velvet bonnet lay beside him, and his high white forehead, around which the dark hair curled in heavy locks, was bare. He was all that a young girl dreams of in her future lover; and his eyes, by turns expressive of pride, tenderness, and impetuosity, were bent fondly on the golden-haired fairy that sat by his side—she, whose ringlets poured like a shower upon his breast, and whose soft violet eyes were raised to his, from time to time, with appeals of confiding tenderness; for he was the friend of her earliest memory, and all her affections, and all her thoughts and hopes, were entwined with his idea and his name.

And so it was with Kenneth; for the opinions, the feelings, the sentiments of Lily, had ever been but the mirror of his own; and again and again, by those glances which never pencil drew nor pen portrayed, he told her that she was dearer to him than all the world beside.

So they dreamed on, this pure and happy pair of loving hearts; the old oaks shook their rustling leaves above them; the hawthorn put forth its sweet perfume, and the Dee murmured complacently by.

Oh, they were so happy! so united—so *one* in thought, in heart, and impulse!

Reclined on Kenneth's breast, Lily lay half embraced and half entranced, with her eyes fixed on the still waters of the flowing stream, and the thick green coppice, which cast a shadow on its surface. Suddenly her eyes dilated with terror; her breast heaved; a voiceless cry arose to her lips, and died there.

The brass muzzle of a carbine glittered among the thick alders opposite; and a fierce eye glared along the polished barrel. She had only time to utter a shriek, and throw herself as a shield before Kenneth, when a red flash broke from among the green leaves; the report rang with a hundred reverberations in the copsewood glen, and the beautiful Lily Donaldson fell on the bosom of her lover, a corpse, with blood flowing in a torrent from her lips.

Who could paint the terror, the despair, of Kenneth?

With glaring eyes and outstretched arms, he stood for a moment like a statue of horror. His first impulse was to dash across the stream, to pierce the thicket, and reach the heart of her destroyer; his second, to fling himself by her side, and endeavour to recall her life which had too surely fled for ever.

Entering her left shoulder, the ball intended for his heart had pierced that of Lily, and her pure spirit had departed to its creator.

* * * *

From that hour poor Kenneth was a sad and silent mourner.

* * * *

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE RAID OF MACALLUM WHOR.

THE scarlet mantle and the blue bonnet of the murderer, with his crest thereon, were found in the thicket, and left no doubt as to who was the perpetrator of this terrible deed, which cast a gloom over all the fair north country. His carbine was also found; for, though full of deadly hate against his rival, Gordon had not the most remote intention of injuring Lily. The moment we saw the frightful result of his fury, he had thrown down his weapon in dismay, and fled like a madman to his Tower among the morasses. In one hour from that time he had come forth again, sheathed in full armour, and crossed the hills at the head of twenty mounted spearmen, journeying no one knew whither.

Kenneth buried his Lily in the old kirkyard of Logie-colstaine, in the grassy holme where, when the sun was in the west, the cross of St. Woloc's spire might fall upon her grave; for those

charming old superstitions which cast a halo round the ancient faith were yet lingering in the hearts of the Scottish people; and thus, though rigid Calvinists, they laid Lily with her feet to the east, and her fair head towards the setting sun, that, according to the tradition of the early Christians, she might, at the day of doom, see our Saviour when he comes from the east in his glory.

And there, by her open grave, Kenneth Logie, with his head bare and his sword drawn, knelt down among the damp mould—that hideous earth, impregnated with the bones of other times; and on his blade and on his Bible made a sad, a stern, but solemn vow of vengeance, which he called on his Lily to hear, and their Maker to register in heaven. He was the last to leave her grave; and, long after all others had departed, the lonely youth—for he was but a youth—was seen to linger there.

Long, long and bitterly, he wept, even as a child weeps, and, embracing the newly-laid turf, kissed it many times; and the sun had set before he tore himself away. But the thought of Halbert Gordon, and the reflection that already four days had elapsed, nerved him anew; and, with lingering steps and many a backward glance, he left the place where the Lily of the Forest lay.

It was now generally known that the Protestant lords were in arms against their Catholic fellow-subjects. Kenneth learned that Gordon had ridden towards the north, and knew that, if he was to be found within the kingdom of Scotland, it would be with his clansmen, the Gordons, beneath the banner of Lord Huntly.

On the night after the funeral, a single horseman, well mounted, and armed after the fashion of a Lowland gentleman, with a close morion, corslet and arm-pieces, gorget and steel gloves, with petronel, Glasgow axe, and two-handed sword, rode forth alone from the old Place and oak-woods of Culbleine. He crossed the Dee, and, leaving the glen, diverged upon the open moorlands, which were then covered with heath and furze, and watered by deep rivulets and swampy hollows; and, striking at once into the road which led towards the west, never halted until he reached a place where it dipped over a hill, and then he checked his horse and looked back.

Like a broad round silver shield, the summer moon was rising behind the oak-woods he had left, and its beams glinted brightly on the spire of the old ruined church, at the foot of which lay Lily's lonely grave. Its shadow was falling full upon the spot where he knew she was lying.

This was her first night in the tomb—in that old and desolate burying-ground, among the weedy graves, the mossy headstones, and remains of the mouldering dead.

It seemed to Kenneth that she must be very cold and very lonely there. The conviction was a bitter one, that she, so young, so beautiful, so golden-haired—who had yet so much of his world about her—should be lying there abandoned to decay, with no one beside her—among the ghastly dead, and not as usual in her bed, in the little tapestried room which her own dear hands had industriously decorated, and which Kenneth knew so well. The idea had something in it frightful and unnatural.

It seemed as if she must still be living! Kenneth could not realise her death. But there was an appalling recollection of a convulsed face, a mouth flowing with blood, a grave, a coffin, a hovelling of earth, a batting down of sods, a trampling of feet, and a sound of lamentation.

She was in her cold and sequestered grave for the first time, with the midnight dew descending upon the grass that covered her.

The pale trooper shuddered, and, turning his horse, galloped furiously down the opposite side of the hill, on his mission of vengeance.

* * * * *

At this time the hereditary Commissary of the Isles under James VI., Archibald seventh Earl of Argyle, and nineteenth chief of his race, a youth only twenty years of age, with the royal standard displayed, and half authorised by the king, was warring against the Catholics of Scotland; but principally against his own enemies, the Earls of Huntly and Errol, who were the heads of the Roman faction. As the old ballad says—

“Macallum Mhor came frae the west, with many a bow and brand,
To waste the Rinnes he thought it best, the Earl of Huntly's land.”

Suddenly assembling 12,000 men, a force which included the hardy islesmen of Sir Lauchlan M'Lean, the M'Intoshes under their chief, the Grants of Urquhart under Gartenbeg (a lesser baron of the clan), the M'Gregors and M'Neils under Barra, and the whole tribe of Campbell, whose fighting force was never under 5000 claymores, together with all whom a thirst for plunder, or feudal malice against the clan Gordon, could induce to join him, Argyle marched through Badenoch in hostile array, with pipes sounding and banners displayed. Repulsed by the Mac-Phersons, a brave and military tribe, who had thrown themselves into the strong fortress of Ruthven, he poured down between the dark pine-woods of Strathspey, in the territory of the Grants, and encamping at Drimnin, upon the beautiful banks of the Avon—the winding river—summoned the Forbeses, the Frazers, the Dunbars, and the Mackenzies to his standard; but

there one solitary horseman alone joined him—Kenneth Logie of Culbleine.

George Earl of Huntly, and Francis Earl of Errol, great constable of Scotland, and hereditary leader of the feudal cavalry, the two nobles on whom this warlike torrent had burst from the northern and western hills, were in no way dismayed; for though steady and unflinching Catholics (and as such suspected of having corresponded with the Spaniards, when their Armada was fitted out against our old hereditary enemies), they knew that James VI., far from being inimical to the Romish cause, was only constrained by popular clamour, and the Reformed clergy, to levy war against them. They knew well that in secret he was friendly to the faith for which his mother—the poor victim of accumulated treasons—perished; and that though he had sent Argyle, an impetuous and inexperienced youth, against them, he would by no means take the field in person. They also knew that the Grants of Gartenbeg, the Campbells of Lochnell, and other Catholic families, who followed the banner of Argyle, with whom they reckoned blood, could not feel warmly in his cause; and thus, never doubting that God would give the victory to the cross which they carried on their ensigns, those brave Lords of Huntly and of Errol took the field with confidence.

At the head of a hundred horsemen, sheathed in complete armour, and magnificently mounted, the very flower of his numerous vassalage, the chief of the Hays left his house of Errol, and, attended by the heir of Bonnitoun, Crichton of Invernytie, and Innes of that Ilk, with all his clan, who bore with them the skull of their patron St. Marnan, marched to the castle of Strathbogie, the muster-place of the Gordons, in their pastoral district, the Garioch.

On the way he was joined by Halbert Gordon of the moated Tower, with his twenty horsemen.

To Strathbogie also came Allan M'Idhni, chief of the clan Cameron, and, after this junction, Huntly, whose forces amounted to only 1500 men, marched towards the Calvinists, after each soldier had made his confession, received communion, and sworn a solemn oath on the *Holy Iron*, to conquer or to die.

Full of enthusiasm for battle, this little troop marched down by the Bogie, and, as they defiled past the castle of Huntly, it is related that his countess—the fair Henriette of Lennox—brought up her youngest son to see the martial array. Pleased with the flash of steel, the note of the trumpet, and patter of the kettle-drum, he clapped his little hands and cried—

“Lord Daddy shall conquer and beat the Campbells!”

This was considered an omen of victory.

Crossing the dun mountains of the Garioch, they halted

Auchincloss, on the same day that the overwhelming force of Argyle encamped at Drimnin.

Passionate indeed was the eagerness, and fierce the joy, with which young Kenneth Logie heard that the troops of Lord Huntly were in the neighbourhood of the camp, and would soon be in view.

Young, brave, and enthusiastic, the valiant Argyle, the boy warrior—unlike the traitors who succeeded him, and in after years betrayed their country and their king—sent forward a few horsemen under the Earl of Athole, and with these went Kenneth Logie; for, being a gentleman volunteer, without vassalage or attendants, his post was among the cavalry, and wherever there was most danger.

The evening of Wednesday, the 2nd October, had closed on the vast purple mountains and woods of sombre pine and silver birch that look down on the glens of the Livat and Fiddich, when these reconnoitring troopers, with their armour glittering in the starlight of the dying gloaming, rode softly and silently in extended order, with swords drawn and matches lighted, towards that part of the hills where they expected to see the forces of Huntly appear.

A line of red fires, dotting the dark brow of the distant hill, marked the bivouac of the Catholics. The smallness of its extent indicated their numerical inferiority, and the hearts of the Calvinists swelled with joy. At that moment a shot was heard; a horseman fell, and before Lord Athole's trumpeter could sound a rally, Captain—afterwards Sir Thomas—Kerr, with a troop of Huntly's cuirassiers, were upon them, shouting the *Cathghairm* of their leader—

"A Gordon! a Gordon! down with the heretics!—God and St. Mary for Scotland!"

A confused discharge of carbines and pistolettes took place; a few horsemen fell on each side; then a short but furious encounter ensued with the sword, till, overborne by the number of Captain Kerr's men, those of Athole gave way, and retired towards the camp of Argyle.

Kenneth Logie was a man of one thought; that thought was vengeance! In this were merged and lost his Protestant sympathies and every other sentiment; but it was not without a sensation of shame that he found himself retiring before the victorious Catholics. Again and again he brandished his sword, and called on his comrades to "stand, and face about for Scotland and her Kirk!" but on they spurred in headlong panic, while shot after shot followed them, and many fell to rise no more from among the thick broom and brushwood, or the deep moss-hags, over which they were galloping in the dark.

"A Gordon! a Gordon!" cried a voice behind Kenneth. He turned, for that voice smote his ear like the shot of a pistol, and in another moment he found himself engaged hand to hand with Halbert of the Tower—the destroyer of Lily, fair Lily of Culbleine. A savage ardour filled his heart; he felt a blindness coming over him in his passionate longing to avenge her.

"Do Thou nerve my hand!" he exclaimed, looking upward to heaven; "do Thou nerve it, and temper my sword, that the blood of the slayer may be shed!"

By this time his retreating comrades had left him far behind.

"Hold all your weapons, gentlemen," exclaimed Kenneth, as the foemen closed around him; "hold back, I charge you, on your honours—it is a single combat;" and he pressed on Gordon, who, being a first-rate swordsman, parried every cut and thrust admirably, for Jock of the Cleugh had spared no pains on his military education. The traitor, however, cared not to encounter Kenneth alone if he could avoid him, and exclaimed—

"A Hay! a Gordon!—Slay, slay!—A thousand merks for his head; 'tis the great Macallum Mhor himself!—Slay—slay!"

On hearing this announcement, a hundred swords were levelled at Kenneth, who was thus compelled to turn his horse and escape, with more than one severe wound, while the shot of many a carbine and pistol followed him, as with a scornful and indignant heart he galloped towards the camp of the King of the West.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE BATTLE OF GLENLIVAT—CONCLUSION OF THE COUNT'S STORY.

THE result of this skirmish was deemed a sure prognostic of victory by the Catholic band, and so far encouraged the Lord Huntly, that, after knighting Captain Kerr on the field, he resolved to attack Argyle before that noble could be joined by his ally, John Lord Forbes, who, with a considerable force, was hovering on the Lowland frontier. At this very time Argyle was already on the march, and his 12,000 followers had poured through Glenlivat, whose mountains gave back with countless reverberations the wild notes of the Highland pipe, the Almayne fife, and Lowland drum, until he reached the rugged banks of a small brook, named by the Celts of the district *Alleanachan*, when he could not conceal his astonishment on beholding Huntly's little band of only 1500 men advancing resolutely through the lower grounds to attack him. These were chiefly horsemen.

well armed on all points; their lances and helmets shone
 he rising sun, and above their squadrons two great banners
 floated.

On the right was the *azure* standard of Huntly, charged with
 the three boars'-heads of Gordon; on the left waved a pennon
argent, with the three escutcheons *gules*, the cognisance of
 the Clays, gained at Luncarty under Kenneth III. In the full blaze
 of light, poured over the dun mountains by the sun of a clear
 October morning, they were advancing, with horses neighing,
 kettle-drums beating, and all their burnished iron gleaming.
 Argyle became apprehensive that his numerical superiority
 of infantry might not avail him against so brilliant a band
 of mounted lairds and gentlemen.

The scene of these operations was a wild and pastoral glen,
 where and there a few tall Scottish firs reared their solemn outlines
 against the cloudless sky, with their dark and prickly foliage,
 and red trunks glittering in dew, as the sun shone on them.

Halting by the margin of the brook, Argyle held a council
 to deliberate whether he should at once attack the Catholics,
 or keep upon the mountains, which were inaccessible to Huntly
 and his horse, and remain there until Lord Forbes came up, with
 the Lowland cavalry. John Stuart, Earl of Athole, a brave and
 upright peer, a privy-councillor of James VI., and a lineal
 descendant of the high-steward of Scotland, now said—

"I would advise your lordships to wait the arrival of
 His Majesty, who hath promised to join us with a large force; or
 to all events to tarry until we are joined by the Frazers,
 the M'Kenzies from the north, and my Lord Forbes with the
 Forbeses, the Irvines, the Lesliees, and other horsemen from the
 Lowlands. We shall then be certain of an almost bloodless
 victory."

This opinion, which was considered the most wise and judicious
 by the more experienced chiefs of Argyle's army, was overborne
 by the impetuosity of the young earl himself, and by old John
 Grant of Gartenbeg, a fierce and treacherous baron, who led
 a thousand Grants from Urquhart and the baronies of Corrimony
 and Glenmorriston, and who, in a furious and ferocious speech,
 urged an immediate attack. The aspect of this venerable chief,
 in his shirt of mail and scarlet tartan, with long white hair
 flowing under his cap of steel, which had no other ornament than
 an eagle's feather and bunch of brambles, together with the
 energetic harangue which he delivered, with sword unsheathed
 and shield uplifted, bore all before it, and Argyle prepared
 to engage, by disposing his army in order of battle in two parallel
 columns, on the acclivity of a hill between Glenlivet and
 Glenrinness.

The right wing was composed of the M'Intoshes and M'Leans, under M'Intosh and Sir Lauchlan M'Lean of Duairt.

The left was formed by the Grants, M'Neils, and M'Gregors, under Grant of Gartenbeg, near whom rode Kenneth Logie, as an *aid*, or esquire. He contemplated the coming strife with gloomy joy, for his dreams of death and revenge were about to be fulfilled.

"My heart is empty now," thought he; "and the sooner it is sold the better." He had no desire to live, and, after seeking and slaying Gordon, had resolved to perish on the battle-field. The centre and vanguard were composed of 4000 Campbells, under Argyle's kinsman, the Laird of Auchinbreck. They carried the earl's banner, and his badges as Great-Master of the Household and High-Justiciar of the Kingdom. Half of these Campbells carried arquebuses; the remainder carried bows, *targets*, and two-handed claymores.

Argyle in person led the reserve, which consisted of 5000 warriors of the Ebudæ and western tribes of Lorn, all clad in their native tartans, with targets of burnished brass, battle-axes of steel, and short Highland bows. More than a hundred war-pipes were pouring the wild *piobrachds* of the various clans from flank to flank, as Huntly's little band approached them.

His vanguard consisted of 300 gentlemen on horseback, clad in bright armour, led by the Earl of Errol, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindoune, the Lairds of Gight and Bonnitoun, Sir Thomas Kerr, and Halbert Gordon of the moated Tower. In front of this small column were three field-pieces, under Sir Andrew Gray, afterwards colonel of the Scottish troops in Bohemia.

Gordon of Cluny led the right wing, Gordon of Abergeldie the left, and Huntly the main body. He had no reserve. In full armour, with a scarf of the Gordon tartan over his cuirass, with his visor up and his sword brandished, he rode along the line.

"My brave clansmen," he exclaimed, "and you, my comrades and most illustrious allies of the house of Errol, remember that this day no alternative is left us but victory or death—glory or extermination! We are not here to fight for our lives only, but for the existence of our families, our estates, our honour, and, what is dearer than all beside, the church of our forefathers, and, with that church, the souls of our children, and the souls of all their posterity. In the name of God and the blessed Virgin, charge!—a Gordon! a Gordon!"

Led on by the Lord High-Constable (though galled by an ill-directed fire from the arquebusiers of Argyle), Huntly's vanguard of knights rushed with uplifted swords upon the first column of the Calvinists, who received them on their targets, and a furious

combat took place. These gentlemen were in full armour, while the poor clansmen were only in their homespun tartan, and thus fought at great disadvantage; but their tremendous claymores cut through many a head and helmet, while every thrust pierced a coat of mail, or sliced away a yard of good horseflesh; thus many a steed recoiled frantically on the main body, bleeding and riderless.

Over the heads of these combatants, the cannoniers of Sir Andrew Gray fired briskly on the *yellow* standard, according to a treacherous arrangement made secretly between Huntly and Campbell of Lochnell, who bore a mortal enmity to Argyle, for having slain his brother Campbell of Calder, in 1592; and, being next heir to the earldom, he saw with ambitious hope and joy the ordnance fire on that peculiar banner which marked the post of his chief; but, lo! a misdirected shot raked the ranks of Lochnell himself, and that deep-witted duinewassal was the first whom it cut in two. The next ball killed M'Neil of Barra, and the third wounded John Grant of Corrimonie.

From the brow of a steep eminence, the M'Leans poured volley after volley with their arquebuses on Huntly's desperate troop, until Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchindoune dashed up, and fell amongst them with a few horsemen; but then the M'Leans slung their fire-arms behind them, and repelled the troopers by the claymore, embowelling the horses by dirk and skene-dhu, and slaying the riders as they were tumbled prone to the earth; and there died the brave Auchindoune, pierced by fifty wounds. His knights fought blindly in a dark cloud; for the smoko of the cannon and arquebuses filled the whole glen, while their reports rang among the mountain-peaks with a thousand echoes.

In dark green tartans, bare-legged and bare-armed, with their targets slung behind them, and their claymores swayed by both hands, the Campbells poured down in thousands like a torrent upon the devoted band of Huntly, whose daring horsemen broke into two bodies, one led by himself, the other by the high constable, who was severely wounded, and desperately they fought, with all the fury that Highland valour, feudal hatred, and religious rancour could inspire; and thus for two hours the battle raged in that narrow glen, till Argyle, observing that his main body wavered, ordered John Grant of Gartenbeg, with his column, consisting of a thousand men of his own name, to "advance and sweep the Catholics from the field."

Clad in scarlet tartan, with helmets and cuirasses of steel, and targets of burnished brass, this body, which had not been engaged otherwise than suffering from the cannonade, was advancing to end the contest, when their leader, who in secret was an ally of Huntly, and a well-wisher to the Catholic cause

threw his target over his shoulder, sheathed his claymore, and cried—

"To the mountains! to the mountains!" on which the Grants, with the whole left wing, gave way, and retired *en masse* towards the hills. Thus Kenneth Logie, who had long curbed his impetuosity, found himself alone, and in one moment more was involved among the advancing tide of Huntly's desperate horsemen, who, fighting every foot of the way, with the earl's torn banner fluttering above them, were hewing a passage over a field strewn with clansmen, whose tartans were drenched in blood. Nothing could surpass the bravery on both sides; one fighting for glory—the other for their lives, honour, and religion.

In the heat of the conflict, Lord Huntly had his horse shot under him, and Halbert Gordon, who, with all his faults, was brave as a lion, quickly slew Campbell of Auchinbreck, and remounted the earl on that gentleman's steed. At that moment, Kenneth Logie, who, with the coolness of a spectator, had been watching the conflict, reserving his strength and his wrath for Gordon, uttered a wild yell of rage and grief, and rushed upon him. They both wore open helmets, and, recognising each other, encountered at once, bridle to bridle, and hand to hand, with a savage and sombre fury, which rendered them quite oblivious of the battle that raged like a storm around them. They had not a breath for insult or invective; their teeth were set; their eyes were full of fire; they both hovered on the brink of eternity, and each saw nothing but his enemy.

"For *her* sake, blessed Lord, direct my hand!" prayed Kenneth, and it seemed as if that voiceless prayer had been heard; for at the very moment his sword passed through the breast of Gordon, who fell forward across the saddle of his victor.

"Dog!" exclaimed the latter, seizing him relentlessly by the throat; "dog, and son of a dog, dost thou repent *her* death?"

"I do," gasped Gordon, almost choked in his blood; "sorely I do; but that fatal bullet was for thee—for thee—and not for *her*!"

"Would to Heaven thine aim had been more true! Lily," cried Kenneth, looking upward, "I have avenged thee."

"And thus I avenge myself!" exclaimed Gordon, as, with the last energy apparently of life, he twice buried his dagger in the body of Kenneth, and they fell together from their horses on the slippery field.

Gordon was supposed to be dead—but evil spirits do not pass so readily from among us.

Kenneth was borne away by a few of the Campbells; but he seemed to be in a dying state.

By this time, Argyle, notwithstanding the vast superiority of

his forces, had lost the battle, and Huntly was victorious. Discouraged by the treachery of the Grants and Lochnell, the Calvinists gave way in every direction; and though the brave McLeans did all that mortal men could do to retrieve the falling fortune of the day, Huntly's horsemen drove them pellmell beyond the rugged brook of Altconlachan, from whence the clansmen retreated to those steep mountains, up which mailed troopers could never pursue them. There, in the obscurity of the night, far down below in Glenlivat, they heard the trumpets sounding, as they summoned the Hays and the Gordons around their leaders, and all dismounted to kneel on that bloody field, where they solemnly sang *Te Deum Laudamus*.

Argyle left his two cousins Lochnell and Auchinbreck, the Laird of Barra, and five hundred men, dead in the valley; while Huntly lost only the Knight of Auchindoune, the Laird of Gicht, and a score or two of troopers.

Such was the Highland battle of Balrinnes or Glenlivat, which struck terror into the Scottish Protestants, and where Argyle lost his famous yellow banner, which was borne with other trophies into the Garioch, and placed on the summit of Huntly's castle of Strathbogie.

Abandoned by the Campbells in their hurried retreat, and left almost dying among the mountains that overlook the Lival, Kenneth found shelter in the hut of a poor old Highland croun whose medical treatment, however kindly meant, aggravated the deadly nature of his wounds; and, as he had no wish to live, two months after the battle he sought his native place out to die; and, however like romance the last episode of this story may be, I must only rehearse the event as it was narrated to me.

John Shool, the sexton of Logie Kirk, on entering the old burial-ground one cold and bitter morning in December, for the purpose of digging a grave, found a horse, with the bridle trailing between its legs, cropping the grass among the mounds and mounds; and he was still more startled—if anything can startle one whose occupation is so horrible—on finding an armed man lying on the flat stone which covers fair Lily's grave. His rigid arms were spread over it, and his cold cheek rested on the letters of her name. The old carle turned him over, and uttered a cry of astonishment and pity on recognising Kenneth Logie of the forest!

John averred that, when first found, his lips were pressed upon the frost-covered gravestone. Some persons thought that this might be the sexton's fancy, or the position was accidental.

He looked calm and placid, and, as the winter sunshine fell upon his blanched face, and the morning wind lifted the d

locks of his dewy hair, it seemed to the old gravedigger as if poor Kenneth smiled.

He was buried there, and the stone which bears the inscription (already given), with the sword and cross, marks the place where he lies; the defaced tomb beside it covers the grave of Lily Donaldson.*

The flowers of many a summer have strewed their leaves above these graves; but at this hour the memory of those lovers is as fresh in Cromar as if they had been buried only yesterday.

Gordon did not die; but, leaving Scotland for ever, entered, as a Catholic, the service of the Emperor, and assuming his mother's name and designation, as Halbert Cunninghame of the Boortree-haugh, soon rose to honour and distinction. After the fashion of some of the Scoto-Imperialists, he spelt his name in a foreign manner, and as "Albrecht Count of Kœningheim" it will be frequently found in the pages of the *Swedish Intelligencer*, and the works of Famiano Strada, the Jesuit.

* A large cairn marked, or still marks, the place where Lily fell by the hand of Halbert Gordon. The stronghold of his family was pulled down many years ago, and the materials were used in the erection of other edifices; the deep wide *Moat* is still traceable on the farm called Parks-of-Coldstone. It surrounds an area of an acre; but the morass has long since been drained.

Book the Eleventh.

CHAPTER LXIX.

WALLENSTEIN.

SUCH was the story revealed to us by the little manuscript book of Kœningheim, who, wandering from his native land, had sought death among the armies of the Empire, but found honour, rank, wealth, and distinction heaped upon him; for, until now, in every field he had escaped unharmed, and seemed to bear a harmed life, for against his breast the bullet had failed, and the steel lost its point.

Ernestine and I kept the secret between ourselves, and to her alone I consigned the little manuscript book, which we resolved to preserve as a relic or souvenir of a brave but unfortunate friend. He was buried with all the military honours of his rank.

King Christian ordered the royal standard to be half hoisted on the *Anna Catharina*, the yards to be topped up in various directions, and the rigging to be thrown into loops and bights; and, under a salute of cannon, the body was lowered into a boat, and slowly pulled ashore. It was the evening of a beautiful and sunny day, but I do not remember to have seen a scene more solemn. The brave and venerable King of Denmark stood abreasted on the deck, and his single eye glistened with self-satisfaction at the last honours he was thus enabled to render the bravest of his enemies—one whose valour had mainly contributed to the defeat of the Danes at Lütter.

All the officers of the little fleet and army attended the interment, and three companies of our regiment (M^r Alpine's, Kildon's, and my own) formed the firing party. The muffled drum rolled; the shrill fife and the solemn war-pipe poured their saddest wail; and after a prayer from the Rev. Gideon Geddes, our preacher, we lowered him into Danish ground, by the shore of the Baltic Sea, whose tideless waves were chafing and rippling on the yellow sand, within a pike-length of his dark and solitary grave.

Close by, a choir of birds sang joyously among a group of green birches and copper beeches; the sun of one of the loveliest days of summer was setting at the far and flat horizon, and

tween the thickets it poured upon the open grave a flood of that warm light which was dying away on the blue waters of the sea. Three hundred bright musket-barrels flashed thrice in the sun, as they were raised with muzzles skyward for the parting volley.

Then the drums rolled, while the pioneers heaped the sandy earth above him, and all was over.

It was an open and somewhat desert spot; near were three earthen tumuli, where perhaps the warriors of some remote and unknown battle lay. These rose to the height of twenty feet above the wave-like ridges of the coast; and between them lay a small morass, with the roots and trunks of vast pines imbedded in the moss—the remnants of some mighty forest, that of old had shrouded the unhallowed rites to the spirit of Loda.

There was no stone to speak to other years, as our mountain songs have it—to tell his fame to other times; and thus the nameless grave of the poor Scottish wanderer was left in its solitude by the sandy shore of the Baltic Sea.

There is ever something solemn, touching, and mysterious about a grave that is solitary; it seems loneliness made more lonely, especially if it is the last resting-place of a stranger—an unknown or a nameless person. Thus it is more than probable, that in time the honest Holsteiners may have framed some dark legend concerning the Scotsman's grave, for oral transmission to the children of their children. But now to resume my own narrative.

Finding that the redoubt or sconce erected on the coast was of considerable strength, and by its elevation a garrison would be able to defend it on the landward, and keep all the adjacent country in check, while from the seaward they could be supplied with every provision,—after some skirmishing with the Imperialists from Kiel, and having one smart encounter, wherein Ian, with two companies of our regiment, handled Wingart's dragoons (who endeavoured to turn our flank) in such a manner that to their dying hour they would never forget the Scottish invincibles—King Christian drew all off on board of his ships, except some of old Colonel Dübbelsteirn's Dutch companies, who were left to defend the place; and who, if ultimately taken, would be no great loss.

We then put to sea.

This measure was rendered imperative by certain tidings which, about this time, old Baron Føysø brought from the sequestered court of Anna Catharina, concerning the siege of the free, and hitherto peaceful, city of Stralsund.

Wallenstein the Duke of Friedland, as generalissimo of the Emperor by sea and land, had resolved to sweep the shores as well as the waters of the Baltic. By shipping from Dantzg and

the Hanse towns, he had carried the war to the other side of that shallow ocean, and pursued the Danes into the heart of their own ales. In the prosecution of his daring and ambitious plans of conquest, he hoped to cut off all communication between the states of Lower Germany and the Scandinavian kings; and by the aid of Poland—which was already dependent on Vienna—he hoped to stretch the authority of Ferdinand II. from the Sound of Elsinour to the shores of the Adriatic.

Such was the *avowed* intention of this great general; but in his inner heart he nursed one greater and more daring scheme, which was nothing less than to acquire territory and found a power, that, together with the army, which by his bravery, tact, and lavish generosity adored him, he might be enabled to throw off the yoke of that empire he was pretending to extend, and thus found a regal dynasty of his own.

In pursuance of this gigantic view he resolved to seize Stralsund, a city of the Baltic—the sixth of the Hanseatic League. It had remained peaceful during this disastrous war, pursuing those habits of industry which had secured it so many privileges from the Dukes of Pomerania; but its noble harbour, and vicinity to the coasts of Sweden and Denmark, made its possession necessary to the conqueror. He sent Campmaster-general Arnheim to the burghers, requiring them to receive an Imperial garrison; but they wisely refused, and betook them to their muskets and morions, buff-coats and halberds. He then sent Colonel Goëtz, who merely requested permission to march the enormous and disorderly army of Austria *through* the city; but the burgo-master was too wary, and this also was refused. Then the gates were closed and cannon loaded; the city stood upon its defence, and Wallenstein besieged it with a fury, the greater because it lay so near his newly-acquired dukedom of Mecklenburg, and barred his way to mightier conquests. He poured his brigades through Pomerania, made the Duke Bogislaus IV. a prisoner; and after receiving 25,000*l.* from the Stralsunders, as a bribe to leave them unmolested, coolly put the money into his treasury, and then attacked the city with the greatest determination, investing it on all sides; but left Arnheim and the Count of Carlstein to press the siege, while he went to scourge the citizens of Gustrow, the capital of Mecklenburg, a duchy which had just been bestowed upon him by Ferdinand.

Such were the tidings brought to the king by the Baron Foyse, as we lay under easy sail in the Fehmer-sund, about the end of summer, and he was thunderstruck by the intelligence; for if Stralsund fell, the free navigation of the Baltic would be for ever lost, alike to Sweden and to Denmark.

Without a hour's delay, he despatched the Baron Karl on

embassy to the great Gustavus Adolphus, begging that they might now forget their petty jealousies, and unite to save the Stralsunders. Karl made good speed with his mission, and the famous treaty of 1628, concluded soon after, was its result. The northern kings bound themselves to combine for the defence of the city, and to oppose every hostile power in the Baltic. Gustavus offered to send Sir Alexander Leslie of Balgonie with five thousand Scottish troops, while Christian was to furnish a squadron of ships; and this squadron that gallant prince resolved to lead in person.

Elseneur was to be the muster-place, and all the remains of our slender garrisons in Zealand, Laaland, and Falster, and every man who could handle a musket in the king's service, was ordered to repair there by an appointed day.

CHAPTER LXX.

THE MAJOR OF MUSKETEERS.

THE whole of our regiment looked forward with joy and ardour to entering on this new arena of operations, where we hoped to do deeds more worthy of us than the futile and desultory conflicts maintained by the brave, but almost fugitive King Christian, along the shores of the Lesser Belt; and though at times I caught the old spirit, from the fire, animation, and example of my comrades, the presence of Ernestine, and the doubt which overhung the fate of Gabrielle, were to me a source of great anxiety.

Christian having heard that the Count of Carlstein was with the Imperialists at the siege of Stralsund, was so gracious as to offer Ernestine the use of a small vessel with a white flag, that she might, accompanied by a slender retinue, rejoin him; but she modestly declined, and requested permission to remain until she could obtain some certain tidings of her sister; and the king pledged himself, that between this day and that of the rendezvous at Elseneur, nothing should be left undone to discover in what direction Count Merodé had marched.

Ernestine's proud heart was filled with gratitude, and on her knees she wept and kissed the rough brown hand of the warrior king, who immediately raised her up.

In the cabin of Sir Nikelas Valdemar she stood, amid a group of some twenty noble ladies of Holstein, all fugitives, and bound for Zealand; but in her satin hood of that bright yellow, which so finely became her beautiful black hair, and with her dark, yet timid and dove-like eyes, my Ernestine was the fairest among that group of fair ones.

By the isles of Fuhnen and Zealand we were to march for Elsinour, while the king was to go round with the fleet by sea, and take on board some of the little garrisons he had left in Faasinge, Cérce, and the lesser isles. The ladies on board the *Anna Catharina*, being anxious to reach the cathedral city of Roskilde or Copenhagen, landed with us at Faaborg, from whence they proceeded at once towards their various destinations; some in calèches, others by wagon, the usual vehicle of the country for transmission from place to place.

The Baron Karl had kindly placed his gilded calèche, with its two sturdy switch-tailed Holsteiners, at the service of Ernestine, so long as she might require them, and, having no other means of protection, she resolved with her female attendants to travel with our column towards Elsinour. The circumstance of her being with us, thrown in a manner so isolated, completely under my wardship (a beautiful young girl under the charge of a young fellow of three-and-twenty—and that young fellow an officer), certainly made me think that, if we were married, a great deal of trouble in the mode of travelling, and expense in the matter of billets, might be saved; but her unprotected state, the distance from her father, and the mystery that overhung her sister's fate, compelled me to keep such occasional thoughts to myself.

Ernestine placed perfect confidence in every soldier of our regiment, and there were not less than a hundred tall gillies in my own company, each of whom considered it his bounden duty to risk life and limb, if necessary, in defence of the foreign lady who was the kinswoman of their captain, and consequently the kinswoman of every one who bore the name of Rollo or McFarquhar.

On the morning we landed at Faaborg, a beautiful and unclouded sun arose from a brilliant sea, and its morning light tipped the foamy waves with purple; even in storms, the waves of that shallow sea are never so great as those of the outer ocean; but by their fury and rapidity they are much more dangerous, as they roll through the narrow straits, to deposit amber on the sands of Courland and on the Prussian shore.

At the small and unsheltered port of Faaborg, the Danish boats landed us on the ruinous quay; the little that had survived the time when the soldiers of Christian III. burned the town, was ill built and fast decaying. Being situated at the end of a shallow bay, and among marshes, I resolved that we should at once march inland, lest the effect of a swampy district on our mountaineers in the summer season might cause some fatal disaster. As the king had directed him to halt for four days, that he might recover from the close confinement of the ships, he marched for Helsing, a small town which we entered about mid-

day, with our drums beating and pipes playing, to the great consternation and manifest annoyance of the townsmen and boors; who, although too cowardly to fight their own battles, gave ever a poor welcome to those who were good-natured enough to do that favour for them.

During this ten miles march, I had frequently walked by the door of Ernestine's calèche: she was becoming intensely dejected; for to lose sight of the Baltic seemed like relinquishing all hope of recovering Gabriëlle.

As the regiment drew up in close column under the colours in the main street of the little town, where all their bright arms flashed in the sun, as they were *ordered* on the ground, with the clatter of seven hundred butts of steel, a well-dressed cavalier, who wore a suit of peach-coloured velvet, laced with silver, large calf-skin boots, a broad hat bound with galloon, and garnished by a red feather, with a sword and pair of pistols in his girdle, rose up from a table under a beech that stood before the door of the Inn, which was named the Green Tree.

While his horse, which stood near, took corn from a wooden bowl, he had been regaling himself with a pipe of tobacco and a can of pale Odenzee beer, when the rat-tat of our drums and the flashing of our arms, as we marched in, had excited his attention. He came slowly towards us. I saw him look once or twice into the calèche which followed the baggage-wains, and then, as became a well-bred cavalier, he touched his beaver to its fair occupant. His figure now seemed familiar to me.

"Welcome to Hesinge, Captain Rollo," said he, grasping my hand, with a broad laugh.

"Major Fritz!" I exclaimed; "I thought you were at Vienna."

"Henckers! I *was* there long enough, paying the penalty of admiring a pair of pretty ankles in white stockings."

"Oh—the mask?"

"No more of that—for I cannot, with patience, think of the outrageous ass I made of myself. However, I escaped; reached Rostock, disguised as a valet of General Arnheim, and wearing a suit of his livery, which I purchased at Vienna, took shipping at the Baltic, reached Nyeborg last week, and was on my way to join the king, when I now learn that his majesty is sailing round by the Great Belt for Helsingör. I am most anxious to serve again."

"Christian will gladly receive you."

"Pon my soul, I would be most happy to take charge of your baggage-guard."

"Thank you, major; but Willie Lumsden, my own lieutenant, is that duty assigned him."

"I think it would be a very interesting service, notwithstanding the dust, the noise, and the screeching of the wheels at one's ear. Ay, faith!" he continued, looking back, "'tis a dainty dame."

"Who, Herr Major?"

"She with the dark hair and yellow hood, in yonder calèche. Those arms are very like Klosterförd's. Surely Karl has not been such a blockhead as to marry the daughter of old Rantzau—Gunhilda, the holiday nun—the prudish little sister of St. Knud?"

"Our pistolier is still in the full enjoyment of single-blessedness."

"Then whose ware may she be?"

I did not make any answer.

"Your colonel's lady," continued this incorrigible fellow; "for I do not perceive any other calèche. What! you grow red as a turkeycock! Zounds—it cannot be—is she thine? my dear fellow, I congratulate you. Happy dog! I should like to be in your shoes for six hours. Is she Carlstein's daughter? Faith! she turned the heads of half the Viennese."

I had some trouble in preserving my countenance and my temper, while Fritz ran on in this fashion. He quickly perceived this.

"Come," said he, "taste the beer of Odenzee. I drink to you, Herr Captain. You are a most fortunate dog; but, upon my soul, I would not like to have a wife half so pretty."

"Why so, Fritz?" said I, rather amused by his rattling manner.

"Because a girl like Lady Ernestine will never want for lovers. They will swarm about her like flies round a honey-pot."

"But I have the strongest faith in her."

"Faith! oh, that is an excellent and most necessary quality for one who has ideas of matrimony."

"Come, Herr Fritz—now, do not be impertinent."

"I—impertinent—not for the world."

"Your faith was strong in a pretty mask of black velvet."

"Enough, enough, my boy. I shall say no more," said he, clinking his can against mine; "my faith was not strong; but I am not the first man who has been led out of his way by seeing a mincing step, a lifted skirt, and a pair of pretty ankles, encased in spotless white stockings. Der Teufel! no. By-the-by, do you mean to beat up the Imperialists in this neighbourhood?"

"Imperialists here—in Odenzee—on this side of the Belt?"

"They are in every region but the Infernal, I believe, which should be their proper quarter. Is it possible that you do not know that a regiment of German musketeers occupy the old castle on the Cape of Helnæsland, about six Danish miles from this?"

"No, and sure I am that M'Farquhar, our lieutenant-colonel, knows nothing of it either."

"'Tis nevertheless true, though. Count Merodé, with his regiment, have ensconced themselves there, and have been playing some pretty pranks among the wives and daughters of our boors for a week past."

"Merodé!" I exclaimed, in a breathless voice, alike thunder-struck, and overjoyed at this intelligence. "Tell me, if there are any ladies with him?"

"How should I know, my comrade?" asked the major waggishly, as he filled the beer-cans again. "Is *one*—is that pretty one in the calèche—not enough for you? But doubt not that, wherever the Merodeurs are, a large assortment of the weaker vessels are always to be found."

"Ah, Heavens! Ernestine, be joyful! Think of what I have just heard!" said I, rushing from the major to the door of the calèche, where Ian had dismounted and was conversing with her; "our dear Gabrielle is in yonder castle on the promontory—not two cannon-shots distant."

"What the devil is all this about?" said Fritz, with a perplexed air, as he switched his capacious boots; "'pon my soul, 'tis highly dramatic!"

The eyes of Ernestine were filled with tears.

"Dioul! are you sure of this?" said Ian, whose hand wandered about the hilt of his long claymore.

"I am sure that at least Merodé is there."

"Enough, then," said Ian; "madam, if this Austrian robber does not surrender your sister to us in four-and-twenty hours—spotless and unharmed as when he seized her—by the soul of my father! by the bones that lie under Cairn na Cuihmné! and by the Holy Iron, I will give *his* head to the wolves, and his heart to the eagles!"

Honest Ian commenced in German, and gradually slid into his Gaëlic, consequently, Ernestine understood only the half of what he said; but enough, however, to be assured that he meant to rescue her sister at all hazards.

"May God bless you, kind cousin!" said she, placing her hands on his shoulders, while her dove-like eyes, that beamed with affectionate admiration, were fixed on his dark and handsome face. "If a brave heart and a strong hand can save her, Gabrielle is already saved; and she could not owe her freedom to one she loves better than her cousin, Ian Dhu!"

"Let Merodé look to himself," continued Ian; "for it is not every day that he and his ruffianly caterans have seven hundred Highlandmen to reckon their accounts with."

Big Phadrig, who was standing near, with his enormous *twagh*, Lochaber axe, gave it a flourish, and ran to acquaint the regi-

† (which had now piled arms) of the pretty piece of work

that was likely to be cut out for it; while Ian assembled M'Alpine, M'Coll, Kildon, Major Fritz, and several other officers, under the *Green Tree*, where—assisted by several cans of Odenzee beer—a solemn council of war was held upon the occasion.

Our suppositions were correct; for, as the sequel proved, poor Gabrielle was actually that moment Merodé's prisoner in the old castle of Helnesland.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE CASTLE OF HELNESLAND.

AFTER carelessly setting on fire the fortress of Fredricksort, Merodé had been ordered by Tilly to establish himself in the next suitable castle; and in search of this, after a desultory and—to the people—disastrous march along the shore of the Lesser Belt, he daringly crossed over to Fuhnen, an island so named in consequence of its beauty and fertility, and established himself in an old tower on the sandy promontory of Helnesland.

Grim and strong, but small, and blending with the rock on which it is built, the castle had formed part of the dowry of the fair Florentina, Princess of Denmark, who about 1380 was espoused by Sir Henry Sinclair of Roslin (in Lothian), whom the king her father created Duke of Oldenburg and Lord of Zetland; and I believe that his coat-of-arms, with the cross engrailed, the ships within the tressure, and the motto of the Lords of Roslin, *Commit thy work to God*, are yet to be seen above the porch of the old fortress, collared by the orders which he wore—the Thistle, the Golden Fleece, and St. Michael.

While all the incidents which have occupied the last few chapters were passing elsewhere, Gabrielle was a prisoner in Helnesland, pining for her father, for her sister, and for freedom, exposed to the incessant persecution of Merodé, who, instead of proceeding to extremities, had grown wonderfully tractable, and actually went the length of offering his hand, as well as his amiable heart.

When not attended by the count, Prudentia was ever by her side, to sing his praises. In this affair the dancer acted, apparently, with great self-denial; but, in truth, she and Merodé had grown perfectly tired of each other; and she was only waiting an opportunity for quietly and conveniently marching off with all the gold and jewels she could lay her pretty hands upon.

"Perverse one," said Prudentia, on one occasion, kissing Gabrielle; "have I not said a thousand times, that this handsome and gallant noble will marry you with joy?"

"Why does he not marry you?" asked Gabrielle simply; "I am sure you are much prettier than I."

"I am only a poor girl of Spain (*Ay de mi Espana!*)—you are the daughter of a great noble."

"The count should remember that, and permit me to join my father——"

"Who is not himself free; rumour says he is marching to Stralsund; but truth adds, as I have said before, that he is imprisoned by the emperor at Vienna."

"My poor father!"

"The Count of Merodé is at present heir-presumptive to the Duke of Pomerania!"

"But the duke may marry."

"What! old Bogislaus IV!" asked Prudentia, with a merry burst of laughter.

"Yes, and have heirs."

"Very likely," replied Prudentia dryly; "for heirs often come into noble families when they have no business to be there."

So great was her terror of Merodé, that Gabrielle scarcely ever dared to undress; she slept by snatches, closing her eyes like a child lulled by weariness and weeping: and often started, thinking that she heard the voice of her sister, addressing her in the accents of affection and tenderness, or distress and despair; or imagining that she felt the hateful touch of the crime-blackened Merodé, or saw the handsome face, the grave, dark, honest eye of Ian Dhu. Frequently she thought herself again in the little dogger, rolling over the foam-crested waves of the Lesser Belt, and that friends were beside her. Then she would spring from the couch of the beautiful but guilty Spanish girl, to look forth on the dawning day, and the young alder-trees, that waved their green branches beneath the old grey tower of Helnesland.

At last, one morning Prudentia disappeared, and all the valuables of Merodé—his diamond order of Carinthia, his massive gold chain, with his holy medals, his purse, &c.—vanished with her, and all the magnificent jewels he had placed at the disposal of Gabrielle, who was doubly shocked on discovering the character of the woman who had been her companion; and that she was Prudentia, the celebrated dancer, and the sister of the infamous Bandolo; for in the first burst of his anger the count told everything. The horror of Gabrielle increased. The remembered sweetness of the dancer's manner seemed now all acting and professional study; her wit became levity, her charming candour, impudence.

Gabrielle felt more than ever the impossibility of trusting any of those around her, and her heart shrank within itself. Dreading his own officers, none of whom were very scrupulous, Merodé

kept her so secluded that now she saw no one, save an old German woman, the wife of a fourrier de campement, whose wagon for retailing beer and tobacco, or exchanging them for plunder, had followed the regiment from Vienna.

As one day will suffice for a specimen of the system pursued by the incorrigible Merodé, I will select that on which he last did Gabrielle the honour to place at her disposal his hand as well as his heart; for he was now beginning to reflect, that if ever she procured her freedom, without some such guarantee (for her silence) as matrimony, old Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume, who certainly was, as he knew, then *en route* for Stralsund, at the head of a column of infantry, might take a terrible vengeance on the whole house of Merodé.

The room occupied by Gabrielle was low and gloomy; it had two windows, arched and grated: one faced the Lesser Belt, and the other the shore of Alsen, about ten miles distant; the other opened to the promontory on which the tower was situated, and overlooked its spacious garden. There, the parterres were bordered by deep edgings of old boxwood; the older hedges and alleys formedabyrinths, overtopped by the rustling leaves of the shady beeches. About their old stems, the purple bramble and the yellow honeysuckle grew in heavy and matted clusters, while long dark wreaths of spiral ivy clambered along their gnarled branches. Here and there, to terminate the vista of the long shady walks, were placed several ancient stones, covered with hideous emblems, and those mysterious Runes, the invention of which is ascribed to Odin, ruler of the elements and king of spells.

Gabrielle seldom gazed into the garden, for some of Merodé's officers were usually seated on the benches there, playing chess, smoking, drinking, or toying with some of the ladies who had occupied the wagons seen by Father Ignatius. Her sad eyes were constantly fixed on the blue waters of the Belt; there liberty and freedom seemed to be; the passing ships—the sky and ocean—with the sea-birds floating like white specks amid the sparkling azure.

Though the season was summer, a large piece of turf (the only fuel in Fuhnen) burned in the fireplace of her chamber; for these old castles by the sea are ever damp and cold. This was supplied from time to time by fresh peats heaped on by the fourrier's wife, with an enormous pair of iron tongs, from an oak bunker, built into a recess, which, like the fireplace, the doors, windows, and every other opening in the edifice, had a low-browed narrow arch, with deep zigzag mouldings, springing from little shafted pillars with scalloped capitals. Great squares of hideous and uncouth tapestry, wrought, as tradition says, by the

Princess Florentina, covered the walls. The figures and the subject were enough to appal even a stouter heart than Gabrielle's.

They represented the last human sacrifice offered up in Britain. In the midst of a wood of gloomy pines stood a group of tall, ghostly, and long-bearded Druids, armed with their brass celts, and bearing goblets of mead. Amidst them stood Einhar, Earl or Jarl of Caithness, who, in a battle near Avon-Horsa, in the days when Gregory the Great was King of Scotland, had taken prisoner Haldona, Prince of Norway, and offered him up to Odin. On an altar of stone the prince lay bound, and in his throat was the knife of the arch-druid,* for even in Gregory's days some priests of Paganrie still lingered in the northern isles.

These horrible, misshapen, and ghastly figures were unpleasant objects for Gabrielle to contemplate; and she always turned from them to the engrailed cross, the heraldic ships, and motto of the Sinclairs, which the princess had hung upon the pines of the forest, committing an anachronism by no means uncommon in ancient tapestries.

Lost in thought, with her cheek resting on her right hand, Gabrielle had been gazing on the waters of the Belt, which mellowed with the shore in the sunny evening haze. Her pretty feet, cased in high-heeled shoes of scarlet velvet, richly embroidered with gold, rested on a satin footstool. Her right hand played with her fine hair, which hung in short loose ringlets, according to the fashion of the time.

A step, and the touch of a hand aroused her.

She turned to meet the impassioned eyes of Merodé, with his lanky black moustache, long ringleted hair, parted in the centre of his forehead, and his sinister face a little flushed by wine and recent merriment. She gave a slight shudder—a shrug of her shoulder, and said—

“Oh—is it you again?”

“And have you really an aversion for me, whom even my enemies admit to be the first in the breach, the foremost in the charge, and the last in retreat—though the Imperialists never do retreat. The heedlessness and imprudence of youth have plunged me into an abyss of misery and error; but my pride still bears me up, Gabrielle—yea, above even your scorn.”

She did not reply.

“Ah!” said he in a low voice, “if I could only be her friend, it would not be a bad preface to the part of lover.”

“Friend—oh, never!” replied Gabrielle, who had overheard these words: “Merodé can never be the friend of a virtuous woman.”

* A mound still marks where this occurred, A.D. 892.

Merodé seemed to be stung by her words; but he laughed, while her eyes filled with tears.

"Upon my soul, girl, you will weary me by this incessant resistance. You are just like Clelia or Cleopatra, who did not give their lovers so much as the smallest kiss, sometimes for six years."

"Dear Ernestine—if you knew all I suffer here!" said Gabrielle, bursting as usual into a passionate fit of weeping.

"Oh, do not talk of Ernestine!" said Merodé, rather coarsely, for the wine he had just imbibed was loosening his tongue while it clouded his faculties. "I do not see why you should have such a horror of following *my* regiment in a gilded calèche drawn by six white horses, when she follows the bare legs of the Scottish musketeers in a calèche drawn by two brown Holsteiners."

"Wretch—silence!" said Gabrielle, crossing to the opposite window, and seating herself.

"Wretch—silence? here is a specimen of such good manners as we learn in Vienna!" said Merodé, following and leaning on the back of her chair. He continued to say a hundred fine things, with which the fluency of the time, his own ready invention, and impulsive nature supplied him. For more than an hour he continued to talk thus; and for that hour Gabrielle did nothing but weep and sob, sob and weep, without replying, till her eyes became inflamed, her face pale, her head ached, and her heart grew sick.

"Ah! tell me, my pretty Gabrielle, why am I so repugnant to you? 'Pon my honour, one would almost imagine I was a veritable ogre! Now, for the last time, I conjure you to tell me, if I have any hopes of living, or if I must blow out my brains! Speak—this silence—this grief—this apathy, overwhelm me with sorrow. Ah, what an unhappy rascal I am!"

Still there was no reply given.

Merodé had been so accustomed by presents, by flattery, and feigned affection, to overcome every obstacle thrown in his way by the many dark, brown, and fair beauties whom he had subdued, that he was piqued, perplexed, and even amused by the difficulty and resistance he encountered in Gabrielle. This gave her a new and dangerous charm; and, after his own fashion, he was now beginning to love her, at the very time when—had he been successful—that love would have been dying away; so he continued to string together assertions of his love and admiration, in the style of camp and barrack love-making, most familiar to him.

"You are so enchanting, Gabrielle! you are just the height I admire, and you must remember how I adored you at Vienna. Though, when taken in detail, perhaps, your face is not of the

kind which sculptors—the blockheads!—term strictly handsome, when taken altogether, it is divine! Your eyes are lively, full of tenderness and fire; your lips are full of smiles—(certainly not just now, by the Henckers!) but red as a rosebud; and your ankles—'pon my soul, they *are* very fine!"

Here Gabrielle retreated to the other window, and turned her back, but he followed her; then she began to tremble with anger.

"I do not mean to insult you—I do not mean to be rude! I have the tongue of an ass," said Merodé, beginning to speak very thick. "What is all this about? Now, if I was not a young fellow of spirit—ah, pardon me, poor little tot!—or is it a romance we are acting? I never meant to marry; but hang me as high as Mordecai, if I will not marry you, Gabrielle—ay, marry you in sober earnest—rather than not have you."

"Insult upon insult!" she murmured.

"Come, come, Gabrielle," said he, approaching a step, "listen to what I say, for assuredly your friends have forgotten you."

"It almost seems so," she replied, drowned in tears; "but even it were so, God will not forget me."

"Neither He nor they can protect you while under the colours of the valiant regiment De Merodé."

"For pity's sake, do not, on any account, be tempted to speak blasphemy," said she.

"Der Teufel! what a difference between girls of eighteen and girls of five-and-forty; the first are as timid as the latter are forward. If I had said to the Baroness Fritz a thousandth part of the fine things I have said to you, she would have melted away in my arms at once. But what the deuce is the matter now? What is it you see? why are your eyes fixed—your nostrils dilated—your cheek flushed? Ah, damnation! am I tipsy, or blind?"

The sad face of Gabrielle had suddenly changed. Her eyes sparkled with tears of astonishment and joy, her cheeks flushed with crimson, her lips trembled.

"Ian!" she exclaimed, stretching her hands towards the window, "Ian—my cousin—come to me—save me, and take me to Ernestine!"

The surprise of Merodé, at all this, speedily became rage. He followed the direction of her eye from the window, and, gazing along the sandy beach towards the north, at an angle of the rock on which the outer wall of the tower was built, he saw the imposing figure of a Scottish Highlander standing erect, as he coolly took a survey of the whole place. He wore a green tartan kilt, with a bright cuirass and helmet; the entire pinions of an eagle surmounted the cone of the latter; a round shield was on his left arm, and a drawn claymore glittered in his right hand.

In seeing this bold fellow within musket-shot of the walls, Merodé could hardly believe his senses; but the stranger was an, as the sequel will show.

"Der Teufel!" said the count, almost choking with rage, "I will notch that rascal's head for him. I knew not that any of these Scots were on this side of the Belt. Hallo! to your arms here," he cried, rushing down-stairs to the court-yard; "to your muskets there, the quarter-guard! Kaspar—Schwindler, do you see that fellow by the water side?"

They did see him, and fired several shots, the report of which alarmed Gabrielle with fear; and she fell upon her knees, but forgot to pray, for her heart had forgotten to beat; and, like one who had been stunned by a thunderbolt, she listened, as shot after shot rang from the tower battlement over her head; and when she saw the snow-white smoke curling away on the wind.

Ian had vanished before the first shot was fired.

"He has escaped!" said Merodé, returning breathless, with wrinkled brows and a bitter smile; "are you rejoiced to hear it?"

Gabrielle did not reply; her thankfulness was too great for utterance.

"Ay, the tall Scot brandished his sword in defiance, and even while we saw the bullets knocking the sand about him, and whitening the trunks of the trees, he plunged into yonder thicket and disappeared. I have sent out Sergeant Swashbückler, with a party, and hope to have him hanged as a spy before nightfall.

"And so yonder tall fellow is your lover, eh? Oh, you need not deny it; I saw your eye say so. Never did a woman's eye light up as yours was lit, save for a lover or a husband. Now, little one, tell me, what see you in that great swinging Scot that you cannot see in me? Still no answer. Are we becoming sulky, passionate, and quarrelsome? 'Pon my soul, women are greater enigmas than those of the sphynx I used to hear about at Rotterdam. So we have got a lover, have we? Oh, very well! I shall not break my heart, believe me."

Merodé was angry, and his heart was full of bitterness and jealousy; but he concealed it admirably.

"Now that your friends are in this neighbourhood, I shall have work cut out for me; they must be received with such hospitality and honour as the arsenals of the Emperor enable us to afford to such visitors. Farewell, just now, Gabrielle. I give you three days to think of it. (Three days! now, have I not the patience of Job?) If in that time you do not learn to love me, I shall hate you!" and he retired singing the fag-end of an old song—

"Three days, fair maid, my love will last,
And in three days my love is past."

New hope sprang up in the bosom of Gabrielle.

Ian—and what a tide of suffocating thoughts his cherished image brought upon her mind!—could not be alone if in the vicinity of Helnesland. He had heard of her detention there, and had come to free—perhaps to love her.

What happiness might yet be in store for her!

Since she had been Merodé's prisoner, she had calculated the time, and found it many, many weeks; these made hundreds of hours, each of which had been counted, and watched wearily too.

She ceased to count them from that period, and began to reckon anew from the time when she had seen Ian.

He escaped the Merodeurs, and the fate their leader intended him to suffer; but many a long hour passed slowly on, and Gabrielle found herself still a prisoner in the old tower of Helnesland.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE SERPENT IN A NEW SKIN.

THE result of our common council of war, held over certain cans of Odenzee beer, under the *Green Tree* at Hesinge, was—*first*, that Gabrielle should be freed from Merodé, if she was still his prisoner; *secondly*, if not, that he should account for her body for body; *thirdly*, that her freedom should be obtained, if possible, by diplomacy or threats, as we had strict orders to proceed to Elsineur, without detour or fighting under any consideration; *fourthly*, that no ransom should be paid (because we had none to pay); and *fifthly*, that, if all means failed, we should risk the king's displeasure, storm Helnesland, and knock all the Merodeurs on the head.

Attended by Phadrig, Ian departed to examine the castle before supper, and had just satisfied himself that it was a large square fortified tower, with grated windows, a battlement bristling with brass pateraroes, a barbican wall lined by six-pound guns, well loopholed, and full of men, when several shots warned him to retire, and he and Phadrig, baffling the Merodeurs, reached our cantonments at Hesinge about nightfall. There, after guards were posted, and the soldiers billeted, the officers sat down to a jovial supper, at the large table under the *Green Tree*.

Ernestine had the best apartment in the inn apportioned to her; I had command of the quarter-guard that night, with the task of posting, every two hours, twelve new sentinels round Hesinge; and (as the Merodeurs were in our vicinity) our soldiers had strict orders from Ian to sleep accoutred in case of a surprise.

The night was moonless and cloudy, and my duty, as captain of the quarter-guard, kept me wakeful and anxious. The street was unlighted, unpaved, full of mud, and encumbered by rubbish and pools of water, where ducks, crows, and storks squatted by day, and where prowling dogs burrowed and snarled by night.

About the twelfth hour, when returning from visiting my sentinels, I paused for a moment in the middle of the street, to observe the dense bank of cloud that arched the sky from east to west, enclosing it on all sides save the north, where there lingered a warm yellow flush, that in so northern a region would never darken, but would brighten with the coming day. It shed a clear cold light on the gable-ends of the little street, on the sharp ridges of the roofs and chimney-tops, while their shadows, and all between me and them, were sunk in blackness and obscurity.

I occupied the house of the Herredsfoged, and, as the colours were deposited there, it had a special guard of twelve pikemen under Sergeant Phadrig Mhor. It stood without the village, and, to visit it, I had to pass through a narrow lane between two privet hedges, one of which enclosed the yard at the back of the inn, and where our baggage-wagons stood.

A faint light that burned in Ernestine's room arrested me.

The shutter was half closed, the light was subdued, and placed in the shade, so that I knew she had retired to rest; yet, with that sentiment so natural to a lover, I stood for a minute gazing at that light, the rays of which were probably falling on the fair and sleeping face of her I loved so well.

At that instant I became aware suddenly that other personages were similarly occupied. Between two of our baggage-wains, two men, like peasants, gazed intently at the solitary ray which shone into the inn-yard. They were evidently lurkers. My suspicions were roused, and, instead of challenging them, I resolved to watch, and loosened the loaded pair of good Doune pistols which hung at my girdle.

The lurkers conferred together in low whispers, and then approached the window. That corner of the inn-yard which it overlooked was involved in the deepest shadow; thus, by passing through an opening in the hedge, I stood within arm's-length of them, and could perceive that they were somewhat tattered in aspect, wore conical white Danish hats with broad brims, and had enormously thick beards.

"They are thieves!" occurred to me immediately. My first thought was to seize them; my second, to fire on them; my third to watch the issue.

After another brief conference, one left his companion to guard; and, ascending by the piled-up chests of a baggage-wain,

reached the little wooden balcony which projected at the back of the house, and softly approached the window of Ernestine, which, as the season was so warm, she had unguardedly left open an inch or two, and he glided into her chamber like an eel—for, as the lattice opened in two leaves from top to bottom, ingress was easily effected; but, before he entered, as the light of the night-lamp fell full on his face, I recognised Bandolo!

My heart beat like lightning! It flashed upon my mind that his comrade must be Bernhard the woodman!

To seize the latter by the ruff behind, to twist it until he was black in the face, and give him a smart blow with the steel claw of my Highland pistol, were the noiseless work of a moment. I laid him quietly on the ground at full length, with two springs reached the balcony from the roof of the baggage-wain, and with one pistol in my teeth, and the other in my right hand, crept softly in by the opened lattice.

Bandolo either believed that I was his comrade Bernhard close behind him, or, artful, subtle, and ferocious as he was, he had found an object so dazzling to gaze on, that he could not resist contemplating it. By the bedside of Ernestine, he stood with an unsheathed poniard in his hand—a stiletto, round-bladed and sharp as a needle.

Ah! what a moment was that! In each hand I had a loaded pistol, and I held them levelled full at his head from the other side of that pretty couch, the muslin curtains of which were half drawn aside, and yet concealed me in shadow.

I could comprehend that luxury and civilization caused the moral depravity of such a man as Merodé, by creating wants which he could not supply, vices into which he plunged, and those false appetites which are the curse of the rich, the great, and luxurious; but here were a couple of incomprehensible rascals, doing mischief apparently for mere mischief's sake, unless we admit the love of revenge, by which Bandolo was assuredly inspired.

The night-lamp stood on a dressing-table, near a round mirror, which threw a reflected light full upon the face of the beautiful sleeper.

The most divine and placid serenity were expressed in the face of Ernestine; on her smooth forehead and dark eyebrows—on her sweet mouth and long eyelashes. She scarcely seemed to respire as she smiled amid her dreams. Partly loose, her black and silky hair had escaped from a most charming little nightcap having three frills of fine lace, and fell in a confused mass upon a neck that was white as a new-fallen snowflake. Her hands unadorned by either rings or bracelets, and looking a hundred times more beautiful in form and colour without them, were

gently crossed upon her breast, like those of the statues in old cathedral aisles. When sleeping thus, she had all the infantile grace of Gabrielle, all her Juno-like dignity was in abeyance; for the prettiest woman in the world can never look dignified in her nightcap. Her beauty, and the chaste purity of her slumber, might have robbed a destroying angel of his wrath; but the hollow, ghastly, and ferocious smile of the yellow-visaged Spaniard showed that he contemplated some terrible villany.

Twice he placed his weapon between his teeth, and drew out a handkerchief, as if to thrust into her mouth, and twice he resumed the stiletto.

"It is too much," thought I, "that his unhallowed eyes should see Ernestine as never lover saw her."

Three seconds had scarcely elapsed; my fingers were trembling on the triggers, and the matches of my pistols were smoking as I breathed upon them.

All at once Bandolo's eyes were lighted by a savage gleam; he placed one of his rough hands on those of Ernestine, and with the other raised his poniard for a blow, that, with this line, might have ended my story—for I never could have survived her.

My pistols were not four feet from his head—I fired one, and must own that when the smoke cleared away, I was petrified to find that, instead of being brained, Bandolo stood glaring at me with eyes that were white with fury, while his face was blackened and his hair scorched off by the explosion. In striking Bernhard, the bullet must have dropped from my pistol, for it was found in the yard next day; but then I thought not of that, and imagined that the fellow must assuredly be *greform*—bullet-proof, or charmed. I fired the other, but the bullet only shattered the mirror; then, by one bound, Bandolo cleared the apartment, reached the top of the baggage-wain, slid down, and escaped. I sprang after him; thus, Ernestine, on being startled from sleep by the discharge of two pistols within a yard of her pretty nose, was only roused in time to see two men spring like evil spirits from the window of her bedchamber.

She uttered a succession of those shrill cries which women have at command on all occasions. The host and hostess, the jungfers, the ostlers, the quarter-guard, and several of our officers who occupied the adjacent rooms, were all on the alert in a minute. M'Coll, holding on his kilt with one hand, and grasping a poker in the other; M'Alpine, with nothing on but his shirt and steel cap, and old Kildon, also in his shirt, with his target and claymore, with others variously accoutred, crowded to the scene of consternation and alarm; neither of which were allayed nor accounted for until I returned from a hopeless pursuit after the scout. By that time the whole inhabitants of the inn were in a terrible state of commotion; but Master Bernhard, who had

been found senseless in the yard, was fortunately secured by the care of Sergeant M'Gillvray, who had ordered the quarter-guard to tie him with ropes, and retain him as a prisoner in the kitchen below.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

BERNHARD'S OFFER.

WHEN I reflected by what a narrow chance Ernestine had escaped a terrible assassination; when I thought of what my emotions, and the emotions of all, would have been, had we found her in the morning—but the idea was horror! I turned the buckle of my belt behind me, and after assuring Ernestine that she was neither killed nor wounded, but only frightened, took my sword in my hand, and ordered M'Gillvray to bring the prisoner to the *Green Tree*, before the door of the inn, where, as morning was now advanced, the waitresses were preparing breakfast for the officers.

The personal appearance of Master Bernhard was in no way improved by the tap I had given him on the head; for a quantity of blood that flowed from the wound had clotted his shock-head of hair, and streaked the hard lines of his coarse and repulsive visage, like the war-paint of an Indian.

"Well, *schelm*," said I; "what have you to urge, that I should not hang you on the branch overhead as an ornament to the goodman's sign?"

"That we should never take away what we cannot give back," growled Bernhard.

"We are old acquaintances now," said I; "you remember the hut at Korslack, and the night with the Merodeurs? Have you always acted on the principle of never taking away that which you cannot restore?"

"Herr Captain, I have tried to do so," he replied; looking anxiously at me, and anon at one of the ostlers, who was quietly knotting a running noose over one of the branches of the tree under which I was seated. "If I take a man's purse I can return it—but his life—oh, Herr Captain!"

"Have you never taken a man's life, Master Bernhard?"

"Have you or your soldiers never taken one, Herr Captain?"

"You are an impudent rascal!" said I, losing patience.

"Perhaps I am," said he; "yet I may be of more service to you than you imagine."

"You are the man who assisted Bandolo to decoy the daughters of the Count of Carlstein from Nyekiöbing, and betrayed one to the Count of Merodé."

"Betray is a harsh word, Herr Schottlander. I am but a poor fellow who, for a rixdollar, will serve any one. I was Merodé's valet at Vienna; he accused me of liking his laced doublets better than his livery, so we parted in dudgeon; but the real secret was, that he discovered his mistress bestowing on me, for nothing, all those blandishments which cost him a thousand doubloons in the year. She was sent to the galleys; I turned woodman, and picked up a ducat or a florin now and then in various ways. Bandolo was acting the gentleman, and required a valet to carry his mails. I sailed with him to many places, where he was picking up information for the Count Tilly, who always pays for it like a prince. Bandolo brought two ladies with him from Falster; 'twas no business of mine—he has often ladies with him. I attended one—he the other, and so we parted company in the dark near Eckernförde; with the youngest, I fell among the Merodeurs, who cheated me of a thousand ducats, which I was to bring Bandolo from the count. I have usually been the scoutmaster's ass, or scapegoat; but I will be so no longer, and will gladly become valet or groom to any Schottish officer who will pay me."

"Thank you, Master Bernhard," said I, ironically; "well, ostler, is that rope ready?"

"I am making all the haste I can, Herr Captain."

"Do not hurry yourself, my good man, I beseech you," said Bernhard, giving a snake-like glance at the ostler.

"And this lady," said I.

"What lady, Herr?"

"Zounds! the lady with whom you fell among the Merodeurs."

"She is now in Helnesland."

"In the castle?"

"With Count Merodé."

"Confound that dogged front of thine!" said I, grinding my teeth with anger, on thinking of all the mischief this villain had aided and abetted. "You hear, gentlemen," I added, "he says that Lady Gabrielle is in Helnesland with Merodé."

"If he can be believed—the point is certain," said Ian.

"I see no reason to doubt him, Ian—now when he is on the point of death."

"Death—oh, do not, for the love of Heaven, say that, Herr Captain!" implored Bernhard in an agitated voice. "It is a sad word for a poor fellow to hear."

"A sadder still for a rich one," said Ian.

Held in the strong grasp of two athletic soldiers, he was totally incapable of resistance; and the muskets of the quarter-guard kept him completely in awe. The noose was ready; agony bedewed his pallid face with perspiration. His knees trembled and he gave me a glance so imploring that my heart failed n

Amidst the confusion of a brawl I might have seen a dozen such fellows shot, and felt no compunction; but to hang up this cowardly and crime-steeped rascal, with his terror verging on despair, was quite another thing; and I began heartily to wish that his life or death had been in the hands of the Herredsfoged of the district, or any other than mine.

"Stay," said Ian; "one feature in this fellow's character is evident. He will do anything for money."

"If I could serve you, Herr, or *you*, with my life," implored Bernhard.

"Well—you know yonder castle of Helnesland?" said Ian.

"As well, Herr Colonel, as if it belonged to me."

"And the Merodeurs?"

"Most of them—they were my comrades at Vienna."

"In prison, I suppose. Well; if your life is spared, will you undertake to guide me with two hundred musketeers, on a dark night, to that sallyport which faces the north?"

"I will, Herr; but the Merodeurs are a thousand strong! and two hundred musketeers—ouf! they will be but a mouthful in Helnesland."

"That is not your business—Dioul!"

"I will make a bargain with the Herr Rollo," said Bernhard, gathering courage at this glimpse of life and hope. "Merodé was to pay Bandolo a thousand ducats for the young grafine, Gabrielle of Carlstein, of which I was to receive my share. Merodé deceived us, and not having the ducats at the time, kept the lady, and troubled himself no more about the matter. I am but a poor fellow; look at my doublet; it has as many holes as there are days in the year. Well, Herr—for four hundred ducats I will bring the young lady to you safe and sound, without the uproar of two hundred musketeers falling into Helnesland in the night, and not knowing which way to turn. In terror at the noise and din of such a piece of work, the young lady will be sure to conceal herself; and your men might all be shot or taken by the Merodeurs, and nothing achieved after all."

"Besides," said Ian, in a low voice, "I have the king's strict orders to march for Elsineur, without firing a shot."

"Can we trust a man who is beyond the pale of the law?" said I.

"I did not make the law, mein Herr," said Bernhard; "if so, I should not have been outlawed—or called a robber, or so forth; four hundred ducats will be quite a fortune to a poor fellow like me. I will bring you the young lady, and *then* the money can be paid me down on this table, under that beech-
Is it a bargain, Herr Captain, and gentlemen Schott-
rs?"

"On my honour it is," said Ian; and Bernhard gave him a glance of thankfulness and joy.

"Four hundred ducats!" said I; "where the devil are we to raise such a sum? The regiment has been without pay for two months past."

"Assemble the officers by beat of drum," said Ian.

The drum was beaten, and in five minutes they were all assembled under the *Green Tree*, thirty Highlanders, all stately men as ever drew a sword; and to them Ian, the lieutenant-colonel, related our dilemma.

Every man of them opened the mouth of his sporran.

"Hold your steel bonnet, kinsman," said Ian to the sergeant, Mhor.

Phadrig held his helmet inverted, and every officer threw in what he could spare; some who had not even a brass bodle, cut the silver or gold buttons from their coats, or twisted off some links from those gold chains which our Scottish officers usually wore during the Thirty Years' War. I broke off ten from mine; Major Fritz gave twenty florins; and Bernhard's eyes glistened with joy, as the coin of every kind and value—silver, brass, and copper—buttons, chains, and rings—rattled into the helmet, where a sum amounting to more than eight hundred ducats was collected.

"This is a pretty sum to give such a rascal!" said M'Alpine, who had just twisted the gold tassels from his sporran.

"It is rewarding treachery and crime," said another; "think of how many brave fellows peril their lives in the field for a stiver per hour."

"By the head of Alpine! I would rather fight Merodé than pay it," said M'Alpine.

"But the king's orders," said our lieutenant-colonel.

"Ah, true! I had forgotten."

"Fellow," said I to Bernhard, "if you deceive me, tremble! for you have just one more in this world to outwit."

"Who, mein Herr—Bandolo?"

"The devil!"

"What a character you give yourself, cousin Philip," said Ian, and all our officers laughed as they sat down to breakfast; "but to business. Get this fellow despatched on his errand; and, until he returns to redeem his word, Phadrig, thou shalt keep the contributions. Away with him and them, too! Let us to breakfast, for I am like a famished wolf."

It was arranged that about nightfall sixty soldiers should march to a lonely place about five miles from Helnesland, for the purpose of meeting Gabrielle, and escorting her with her guide to Hesinge. The latter was immediately despatched with a note, written by Ernestine, acquainting her with our vicu

(but of that she was already partly aware), and the necessity of trusting implicitly to the bearer; who, though he had deceived them once, would not do so again.

"For mercy's sake, gentlemen!" said Bernhard, before departing, "keep our compact a secret, lest Count Tilly's scout, Bandolo, who seems to be everywhere at once, may discover and frustrate the whole. He hears everything, I believe, like Grön Jette or the wild huntsman."

Bernhard placed the letter in one of the many pockets of his tattered doublet, and set out on his mission. It was not without many conflicting thoughts and arguments that we agreed to intrust Gabrielle to this man, who was doubtless the perpetrator of many frightful crimes; but necessity owns no law, and none but a well-known vagabond could have found easy ingress or egress by the gates and guards of the illustrious Count of Merodé.

Now, as these volumes are not a romance, and there is not the least necessity for keeping my readers behind a curtain, I may as well relate, that, as the great father of all mischief would have it, Bandolo, on escaping from the inn-yard, had taken shelter in the very branches of that magnificent beech, under which the compact with Bernhard had been so fully discussed and arranged. It was a vast and thickly-foliaged tree; and from the table that encircled its stem he had easily reached a place of concealment and security.

There he had sat, perched right over our heads, during the examination of Bernhard; there he had narrowly escaped discovery, when the ostler was knotting the noose over one of the lower branches; and he had heard all our arrangements and conversation, while sitting with his heels dangling over the sumptuous breakfast to which thirty of our officers sat down, encircling the board and the broad beech-tree, like Knights of the Round Table; and there he had seen Bernhard receive the letter, and depart for Helnesland, on that mission which he resolved to frustrate, and turn, perhaps, to his own account.

But there he was compelled to sit, during the slow passing hours of a long and sunny summer day, for the little street of Hesinge was thronged by our soldiers; and there were constantly some of our officers drinking Moselle, Neckar, or Odensee beer, playing at ombre or chess, under the tree, and the night fell before the bravo or scout, for he was both, was enabled to quit his hiding-place; and, after avoiding our sentinels, set out, with stiffened limbs and a heart that burned with rage and spite, for Helnesland.

Moreover, he took with him a pair of steel Donne pistols, giving to Phadrig Mhor, who somewhat witlessly had left on the table.

This must have been about ten at night.

One hour before that, sixty of our musketeers, under my command, with several officers as volunteers, marched in the same direction, and by the most retired roads, towards the head of a bay, the name of which I have forgotten ; but it is formed by the promontory of Helnes, on which stands the old castle, then occupied by the *Merodeurs*—that regiment of terrible memory !

CHAPTER LXXIV.

HOW BERNHARD DELIVERED THE LETTER.

GABRIELLE had now counted that eight-and-thirty hours had elapsed since she had seen the figure of Ian appear for a moment at that angle of rock, which was the first point whereon she hurried to gaze in the morning and the last one at night. So far as she knew, no effort had yet been made to free her. Could his appearance, then, have been reality ? Was it not one of those fitting shadows, those *Döblegangers*, those dire forebodings of coming evil, of which she had heard so often in the wild stories of Germany ? Or was it merely a conjuration of her own excited fancy, which clung to the image of Ian as one might cling to the memory of the dead ; for though Ian, by many a kindness, and by a thousand pretty attentions, had (*unconsciously*) left nothing undone to make this young and simple girl love him, she had no hope of ever being loved in return ; for, true as the needle to the pole, his heart ever turned to that provoking Highland love which he had left behind him in the land of the rock and eagle.

Of late, Ian's image had recurred less frequently to the mind of Gabrielle, for in her excessive tribulation she wept for her father and sister, and thought of them alone ; but now the sudden vision of that well-remembered form, so stately and so graceful, with the glittering accoutrements, the waving tartan, and the eagle's double pinions towering on his polished helmet, brought back all that secret hope to her heart, and *those* dear thoughts, as yet unuttered, save to Ernestine. Again the old fascination stole over her senses, like a chaste and mellowed light along a waveless sea ; for tumult, storms, and wrath lay slumbering in its placid depths.

Evening had come again. Gabrielle was alone, and seated in one of the little arched windows of her room. All was silent in that old castle by the sea ; not a breath of wind stirred the leaves of the green oaks or copper beeches ; not a murmur floated along the waters of the narrow Belt.

The remembrance of the kind and loveable manner, the dark and somewhat severely handsome face of Ian Dhu, excited in her

breast a new and unmitigated repugnance for her tormentor, Merodé; though the count was also a handsome man, and (save when an occasional gleam of misanthropy or hatred flashed in his eyes) had usually a merry and reckless aspect.

Gabrielle was enduring another evening of her mechanical existence, watching the daylight fade along the sea, and as the sun sank behind the gravel hills, the low, flat, naked shores of Juteland—the Jylland of the Danes—the foamy crests of the dancing billows sparkled in gold, and the long sandy shore was steeped in the same saffron light.

Merodé's offer of marriage, after every other means of persuasion had failed, she considered a fresh insult; and about an hour before, he had left her, with a remembrance that the three days he had given her to think of it were rapidly drawing to a close.

"I assure you, my dear Gabrielle," he had said, in his usual easy and assured way, "your marriage with me will suit your father's ideas exactly. In fact, he will be quite delighted to find that he is still likely to have a son-in-law a count; for by this time he will probably have learned all I told you yesterday of poor Kœnigheim's death. Now, if he had not been in such a hurry to die, old Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume would have had both his daughters countesses; but let us not despair, for of counts there are more than plenty between this and the ramparts of Belgrade."

A voice below her window startled her; she looked down, and saw a tatterdemalion, with a shock-head of dark hair, that mingled with an enormous and untrimmed beard, holding in his hands a conical white hat and knotted stick, and with a long knife in his girdle. He was seated on a fragment of that rock on which the castle was built, and one side of which jutted into the tideless sea, while the outworks seemed to be based on drifted sand. The stranger waved his battered hat. Gabrielle shuddered and withdrew, with a sudden emotion of anger; for she remembered the pretended valet of Bandolo, and their voyage in the dogger of Dantzic.

The visitor muttered an oath, and shrunk close to the wall, lest a Merodeur, who leaned on his musket on the bartizan of the tower overhead, should observe him. After a time Gabrielle resumed her seat at the window, but immediately rose again, for the man was still there. He made many signs which she did not understand; sometimes touching his hat, at other times placing one finger beside his nose and winking slyly, then kissing his hand and laying it on his heart.

These were all Master Bernhard's modes of evincing a desire to communicate something that was secret and important, while at the same time he vowed fidelity and truth—and no doubt the mory of the helmet full of trinkets, &c., awaiting him at

Hesinge, made the rascal (for the time) true as steel to his mission.

Believing that he was mocking her, Gabrielle again withdrew with a sad and swelling heart; for now such a trivial circumstance as the supposed insolence of this man fretted her.

On her pretty face disappearing a second time, Bernhard uttered a tremendous oath, gave his conical hat a violent punch on the crown; and began to whistle on two of his fingers, uttering low and peculiar notes, indicative of various things best known to himself, who had acquired this accomplishment in the common prison and Rasp-haus; but fears of the sentinel recurred to him, and he was compelled to revert to patience and rending his beard, which made his face closely resemble a black furze-bush, with a cat looking out of it.

After a time Gabrielle returned to the window. The sun had now set; its golden beams still lingered on the wavelets of the Belt; but the man was yet beneath her window, seated on the shelf of the rock, where the yellow sea was rippling; and again he greeted her with his whole vocabulary of nods, winks, and signs.

"This is strange pertinacity," thought Gabrielle; "the man is intoxicated!"

At last, after searching in a deep pocket of his tattered doublet, he fished up a little note, and displayed it with a glance of triumph, holding the while his conical hat between it and the castle, lest the sentinel should see. It was evident that he cared less about being seen himself, than having his letter intercepted.

"A letter—from whom can it be?" thought Gabrielle, while her heart beat with increased velocity; "and in *his* care, too! 'tis some fresh insult—an officer of Merodé has discovered that I am here, and takes this mode of sending me a billet, expressing a love, perhaps, as good as his commander's."

Full of anger again at this idea, she again retired; and then Bernhard bequeathed himself again to the devil, tore his hat with his teeth, and stamped with rage. Curiosity made Gabrielle peep again, and then Bernhard held up the letter with a sulky and indignant air, and made a motion indicative of his intention to tear it in pieces if it was not accepted. Suddenly connecting the billet with the recent appearance of Ian, she threw open her window, and Bernhard with a joyful grin held up the letter.

"From Hesinge, lady," said he, in a husky whisper; "from your sister."

"From Ernestine! ah, forgive me, forgive me for my reluctance and delay!" replied Gabrielle, while her heart swelled almost to bursting with sudden emotion; "ah, Heaven! how am I to obtain it—the window is so high?"

"If you had a cord—quick, or that schelm of a Merodeur on the tower-top may send a bullet this way to pay the postage."

Gabrielle gave a hurried glance about her. There was not in all her apartment a piece of cord. Ernestine's letter was not twenty feet from her: she was in despair, and trembling with eagerness.

"Oh, joy!" she exclaimed, as a sudden thought seized her; "*This* will do!" and seizing her scissors, in a moment she ripped off six or seven yards of silver braid from the skirt of her fardingale—a blue satin brocade, one of many that Merodé (who had at his disposal selections of all the best wardrobes in Juteland) had given her, and which, for lack of others, she had been compelled to wear.

To this cord, which he thought was much too valuable for such a purpose, Bernhard tied the note; Gabrielle towed it in like a little fish, and, kissing her sister's handwriting, fell on her knees to thank Heaven for sending her this; a mist came over her eyes—they were full of hot salt tears; and though she trembled with eagerness to read, for some moments she found herself incapable of doing so.

It was the familiar handwriting of her sister; but hurriedly and tremulously written. Advice and directions were intermingled with ardent expressions of regard; for though they were the daughters of different mothers, the love between these two girls was as strong as esteem, affection, and the tie of blood could make it. There was a difference in their love, too; for Gabrielle looked up to her tall and dark-eyed sister with something of a daughter's reliance and respect; and Ernestine, from the habit of giving advice, and taking charge of her blue-eyed and merry little sister (for she never could alter her first impression, that Gabrielle was yet a child), had that regard for her which we always have for those whom we protect.

Interrupted at every word or two by reiterated expressions of sisterly regard, the letter urged that she should immediately escape, if possible, from Helnæsland, as the Highlanders could only remain at Hesinge for another day, after which they must march for Helsingör; and that she must trust implicitly to the bearer—"What a man to confide in!" thought Gabrielle, glancing at Bernhard's tremendous beard)—the bearer, who could conduct her to a place near Helnæs, where friends would be waiting to receive her.

"Escape—but how am I to escape?" thought Gabrielle, as her eyes filled with tears, and she pressed her hands upon her burning temples; "all the doors of the passages and ambulatories between this and the court are kept closed and locked by Merodé or his creatures; and the wall—it is so high! and I have only a day to decide; ah, dear Ernestine, I have no hope—none—none!"

Again and again she read the letter, in the hope that it might contain some hint; but there was no such item there.

"Are you coming, then—not just now; but when the darkness sets in?" said Bernhard, who was still sitting below the window, and to whom she turned for some advice.

"How can I descend? I will do anything—anything to escape from this."

"Could you slide down a stout cord if I brought one?"

"I believe that I could."

"Are you not certain, young lady?"

"Oh yes! I am quite certain."

"Well, by ten o'clock I will be back again, for I do not like sitting in view of that fellow on the tower-head. I am in expectation of receiving a shot every moment. Listen—collect all the valuables you have, for I will expect a little fee from you for my trouble; I am only a poor fellow who has lost his employment by the war. When you have them all ready, secure your door inside."

"Alas! 'tis generally bolted on the *outside*."

"Well, pile whatever you can move against it—a bed, an chimney, chairs, tables, everything that will obstruct entrance, and give us an opportunity of getting clear off; at least, so far as yonder sandhills beyond the thicket, for there your friends will be waiting you, even before this perhaps. Have all prepared, lady; in two hours I will be back with a stout cord from one of the boats moored at the point yonder."

Gabrielle had not words to thank him, but kissed both her hands, and then, stealthily as a cat, he crept away. He had measured the wall by a glance of his eye. In many an escape and robbery he had scaled and descended a higher and more dangerous; thus he felt assured that Gabrielle must be able to do so too.

She turned to a sundial that was carved on the corner of one of the windows, and found that it wanted exactly two hours of the time at which this man was to return for her; and she was impatient. Could Gabrielle have conceived, or been informed, of half the atrocities this outlaw had committed, she could rather, perhaps, have remained with Merodé than trusted herself to his guidance; but she had a pure soul and a charitable heart, and viewed the emotions and impulses of other minds through the innocent medium of her own. Thus, though she knew Bernhard to be the person who brought her to Merodé, she now implicitly believed that he had lost his way at Eckernörd, and been deceived, as well as herself. She even imagined that her repugnance to his aspect was not so great as at first; the villainous leer of his yellow eyes seemed to be only a comical wrinkle; and his exuberance of beard and matted mass of hair, like his rags and worn shoes, might only be the result of poverty; and had she not heard Father Ignatius preach that it was wrong

to despise the poor, for they were peculiarly the children of Heaven? It seemed wicked to suspect the poor man, who had come so far to free and serve her; and, as if to make reparation, she selected the most beautiful of her own rings (setting aside all the more valuable and magnificent jewels with which Merodé had encumbered her room) as a gift for her liberator.

Half an hour had elapsed, and now the sun's rays seemed to tremble above the western horizon and the level shores of Juteland.

"In two hours and a half I shall be with Ernestine! Two hours and a half—ah, my Heaven! can it be possible? At last! at last! Oh, how I shall kiss her, and weep upon her breast! My dear, good, kind Ernestine! My sister and my mother too!"

Thus did Gabrielle mutter from time to time, as she watched the rays slowly revolve round the sundial, and saw the shadow of the gnomon gradually fade away; as the evening bells began to toll, the sun sank behind Sleben, and his rays shot upwards, diverging with tenfold brilliance as the coast between became a darker and more defined outline. The setting of the sun was the first approach to night. She beheld it with joy, and, by the pure transparent atmosphere of the northern evening, continued to watch the growing shadows, and that landscape on which she hoped she was now gazing for the *last time*.

Placid as a mirror of polished steel the water lay in the fiörd; the scenery was calm and tranquil. Meadows of emerald green bespangled with wild-flowers, or young corn-fields bending under the breath of the soft summer wind, covered the long and narrow promontory of Helnæs. Rising from the turf-fires and cottage chimneys, the silvery smoke curled far into the amber-coloured sky of evening; on one side lay a scene of peace and contentment, beautiful and rich as browsing cattle, the fragrance of orchards and flowers, corn and honey, could make it; on the other, lay the long blue waters of the Belt, winding between Sleswig and Fuhnen—the *Nine*.

All this was visible from her window in that grim old castle, which was founded on a mass of rock, that, darkly and grey, jutted from among the golden-coloured sand into the chafing sea. Silvering every wavelet that rippled the calm surface of the narrow ocean, the soft moon rose slowly above those level shores that hem in the waves, from whence sailed those savage but adventurous conquerors, who gave their name to all the land between the British Channel and the Scottish frontier.

Now, Gabrielle remembered the advice of Bernhard concerning the barricading of her door; she rose hastily to execute it; and saw at a glance, that, by placing a table between it and an angle of the wall, she could effectually bar all entrance; for the door (which opened inwards) was of oak, hinged with iron, and though

ld, was of great strength, being received into the stone-work all round; thus, if so secured, nothing less forcible than a cannon-hot, or a battering-ram, could affect it.

"Ah! how foolish I have been in never perceiving this before! How many nights might I have slept in comparative peace, nor rusted to the lingering honour and casual pity of Merodé."

Thus thought Gabrielle.

But half an hour, she calculated, was wanting of the time when Bernhard would return; and she was preparing to secure her door in the manner described, when the sound of steps in the passage arrested her; the door was hastily opened, and her agitated heart almost ceased to beat when she beheld the Count Merodé!

CHAPTER LXXV.

CAN SHE ESCAPE NOW?

ULRICK entered, and, by the manner in which he closed the door and crossed the room, Gabrielle could perceive with terror (though there was no other light than that afforded by the set sun and rising moon) that he was quite intoxicated. Bad as he was, he had hitherto treated her—all things considered—with remarkable respect; and never, until this important night, had fatally dared to conceive the idea of a visit at such an hour.

Gabrielle had always thought that, as love could not exist without a returned affection, the flame in Merodé's heart would soon expire; but the pretty casuist did not know that it was not the love of a pure heart which animated the count. Had it been so, she had long since been free.

The count wore a magnificent suit of dark blue velvet, adorned by sparkling diamond buttons and seed pearls. On his head was a montero cap with a tall feather, the quill of which was studded with diamonds. His shoulder-belt and boots were of spotless white leather, and his broad collar was of the richest lace; but cap and feather, belt and doublet, were all awry, the latter being half buttoned in the wrong holes, while his plume hung down his back.

The count was reeling; and, in the twilight, Gabrielle could perceive that his face was flushed, his eyes bloodshot, and inflamed by passion and excitement. He closed the door of the room, and, to her inexpressible alarm, locked it! He then, with a maudlin expression of admiration on his face, and with outspread arms, approached her, but she eluded him, and he sank into a chair; his cap fell off, and after several ineffectual attempts to recover it, he said, with many pauses—

"My darling must not be alarmed if I come thus to visit her at an hour so untimely; 'tis for a moment—only for a moment—'pon my soul it is—bah! you are not angry with me, are you?"

"Will your excellency never weary of persecuting me?"

"Little rogue, you *are* angry!"

"Oh no! my lord, I am not," replied Gabrielle, trembling with fear and perplexity.

"How could you be angry? 'twould be very cruel; 'tis only a bridegroom's privilege, for we are to be married to-morrow by Camargo's chaplain. Der Teufel! yes—I will show you a magnificent dress which our quartermaster picked up somewhere; it is worth ten thousand ducats if it is worth a stiver! and you are to be married in that, my pretty one. It will almost stand with seed pearls and embroidery—yes, 'tis devilish fine, I assure you; and in it my little bride will look magnificent. Ah! come and give me a kiss! Do not be angry, 'tis the wine—strong wine. The dress, it belonged to the Countess of Fehmarn, old King Kit's one-eyed wife—I mean the left hand of old King Christian. 'Tis a glorious fashion that of his, marrying one wife for love and another for money. If the emperor would only marry my sister Josephine in that way, I should be sure of my marshal's bâton—but what do I care for money? We don't want it—we Merodeurs—no! we pay all our scores with a roll on the drum, or by hanging up the burgomaster. I wonder if the devil will be satisfied with a check on the same bank; but he beats a little on the drum himself, for we all know the devil's tattoo."

"Oh, what a sensual wretch is this when compared to Ian Dhu, that soul of honour!" thought Gabrielle, as Merodé rocked himself on a chair during his long and rambling speech, which was interrupted by many a hiccup.

Every moment she expected the arrival of Bernhard, and now she was locked into her chamber with her intoxicated tormentor—locked in hopelessly for the night.

"Gabrielle, Gabrielle," said the count; "dost love me any better than at first?"

"My lord," began Gabrielle (willing to humour him a little), "first love——"

"A fig for first love!" cried he, snapping his fingers, and making ineffectual efforts to rise. "'Tis all stuff, and makes a bold fellow timid and retiring—and then the girl, with her mystery, modesty, and touch-me-not face! Bah! 'tis enough to give one a fit of the spleen. Second love is founded upon judgment, and is strengthened and matured by it—yes—I am a philosopher—d—me! But if such is the case with a second or third love, what must be the strength and maturity, the fervour and ferocity of a

twentieth love, like mine for thee? Oh, Gabrielle—Gabrielle, come hither, you little devil, and kiss me!"

At that moment the shrill low whistle of Bernhard sounded beneath the window, and made Gabrielle start.

"So you will not come to me—eh? Ah—true love is always modest and retiring—it likes mystery, too! How good to think that I have had you under lock and key for so many weeks, and not one of my merry rascals—even Count John of Brisgau or Jehan de Vart—have found you out! Come to me, I tell you, or I shall lose patience; one kiss, little one—only one."

Gabrielle remained aloof, and wept with mingled emotions of shame and mortification; then Merodé began to swear, and say some things that made the poor girl turn alternately cherry red and deadly pale. Again she heard Bernhard whistling, and her anxiety was almost insupportable.

"Der Teufel! yes—to-morrow is the happy day—and Camargo's chaplain—(Camargo's, is it not? oh yes!)—will do the affair for us. Those whom Heaven and Camargo's chaplain have put together, let no rascal put asunder. Right—Henckers! my girl, why do you spin round in that fashion?—and who is that who whistles there?"

"Three days—three days, my love will last,
And—in—three days—my—love is past."

After this, a few indescribable snorts and flourishes were the only signs of life he made; his head had sunk forward on his breast, and fearfully Gabrielle approached him. He was in a profound and unmistakeable drunken sleep. Gabrielle's heart beat like lightning; she sprang to the window, and below, in the twilight, discerned the dark figure of Bernhard.

"You have appeared at last," he growled, in a low voice; "I thought you were never coming."

"Pardon me—I have been watched."

"Watched—by whom?" asked Bernhard, in a low whisper.

"Merodé."

"Gott in Himmel! do you say so? and he——"

"Is now asleep, as fast as wine can make him."

"Quick, then! Lower your cord, and draw up the rope, for we have not a moment to lose. If the rounds pass, they will fire, and I would not run the risk of being shot for all the women between the Elbe and the Oder."

Gabrielle lowered the silver cord, by which she had received Ernestine's letter, and thereby towed in the end of a stout rope.

"Oh, to what shall I fasten this?" she asked.

"How should I know?" growled Bernhard; "to anything—but be quick—anything that will cross the narrow window and sustain your weight."

The long iron tongs by which the turf was placed on the hearth now met the eye of Gabrielle; she tied the knot with her pretty and trembling hands to the centre of them, and placed them across the aperture of the narrow window, thus forming a double bar, strong enough to sustain the weight of a cuirassier armed *cap-à-pié*, horse and all.

"Hist!" said Bernhard, as he steadied the end of the rope; "be sure that you have knotted it well, and fixed it crosswise, for I have no wish that you should slip and break my neck, to say nothing of your own bones. Now, then, descend, if you please."

"But I must cover my poor hands, or the rope will fret them."

"Bravo! get a pair of gloves, a handkerchief, or anything," said Bernhard, who—vagabond as he was—began to be quite charmed by the courage and foresight of this noble girl; and he felt a satisfaction in serving her. Never before had such an honest glow spread through his savage heart.

Gabrielle placed a soft handkerchief over each of her tender hands, and, by the assistance of a chair, passed over the window-sill; then the night wind blew her light dress and her fair hair about, for, in her haste, hood and mantle were alike forgotten. Merodé still slept like a dormouse, and it was evident that he would continue to do so until morning; but the foreboding thought flashed upon the mind of the fugitive, that she might only be flying from one danger to fall into another.

"My God!" said Gabrielle, "thou wilt be kind, and protect a poor girl who cannot protect herself. Oh yes—I will confide in Thee!"

Inspired by this thought, she took courage, and slid in a moment to the ground, alighting with a shock which Bernhard lessened, by partly receiving her in his arms. Had she known all—or even a few of the crimes his hands had committed—she would have shrunk from their touch as from death.

She could scarcely whisper her thanks, and indeed Bernhard, who heard the tramp of the approaching rounds on the tower above, did not give her time; for, seizing her hand, he led her softly and hurriedly round an angle of the outworks, from whence, concealed by palisades and shrubbery, they were to creep towards the road that led by the margin of the bay towards Hesinge.

Next morning Merodé was awakened by the quartermaster's wife knocking at the door of Gabrielle's room. He started from his drunken slumber, and opened the door with an air of perplexity. Fraü Rümple appeared with the famous pearl dress upon her arm, and with a bridal veil and chaplet in her hands; but on seeing the bewildered count, she curtsied with a waggish "e, and said that Colonel Camargo's chaplain had arrived.

"Der Tenfel!" cried Merodé, as he rushed to the open window, and saw the chair, the crossed tongs, and the cord yet hanging by the wall. "Call Sergeant Swaschbücker! by the Tenckers! my bird has flown!"

On one hand favoured by the moon, which lit their devious path, and on the other shrouded by high palisades painted green, and stunted trees that grew upon the peninsula, Gabrielle and her guide had rapidly and stealthily pursued their way towards a ridge where grew a clump of trees. It was visible in dark outline between them and the last flush of dusky yellow that lingered at the horizon. The clump was about three or four miles distant; and near it Bernhard informed Gabrielle that a party of Scottish Highlanders were halted.

As the distance increased between her and the grim tower on Helnesland, and when she began to be more reassured, Gabrielle, who tied a handkerchief over her flowing and beautiful hair, turned from time to time, and examined the face of her guide. It was hideous! its aspect was terrible; for ignorance and crime had done everything to destroy the intellectual and develop the animal propensities of Bernhard, whose surname I never learned. Gabrielle observed that his stealthy eyes wore a constant expression of alarm; he seemed to be in perpetual dread of meeting some one.

Fear on her part, with anxiety and avarice on his, enabled them to walk so well, that in three-quarters of an hour they were close to the thicket of trees, when a man approached them from under their very shadow. This was the first person they had met since leaving Helnes.

Gabrielle shrunk close to the side of Bernhard, who grasped the haft of his knife, while an exclamation of rage and fear escaped his lips, on finding himself confronted by—Bandolo!

It was indeed that man, whom (of all others in the world) he dreaded most to meet at such a moment. In each hand he had cocked pistol—the Highland tacks which he had stolen from Madrig Mhor.

Bernhard had only his knife, and, as he unsheathed it, Bandolo wore on seeing its blue and sinister gleam. Then he uttered one of those exulting laughs, to which his ferocious character imparted sound not unlike the growl of a panther.

"Ha! ha! ha! Well, fool—you knew not that, while you made that precious bargain at the inn-door of Hesinge, I was seated among the branches of the *green tree* above. *Maldicion a Dios!* but this is a meeting, as unexpected to me as it seems unwelcome to you, Camarado Bernhard!"

The Spaniard and the German glared at each other like two wild cats, and Gabrielle felt as if she was about to die with terror between them.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE CRAPE SCARF OF M'ALPINE.

WHILE relating the adventures of Gabrielle, as I afterwards learned them, I must not lose sight of my own.

With sixty Highland soldiers, accompanied by Angus Roy M'Alpine, Kildon, and one or two other officers, I had formed a little bivouac at a small clump of trees, about three or four miles from the castle of Helness ; there we waited anxiously the result of Bernhard's mission, and made many resolutions, if it failed, to bring on the whole regiment, and, though we had only twelve hours to spare, set the king's commands at naught, and—if Ian consented—take the Merodeurs by storm.

We lay in concealment near the thicket, and our advanced sentinels sat among the long grass beyond it, rolled up in their green plaids, and were quite invisible ; for we made use of every precaution that Scottish warfare and Highland hunting made familiar to us, to approach Helness as near as possible without being seen.

Our *Weywacht*, as the Germans would call it, was made on a spot of the greenest turf ; there we piled our loaded muskets, opened our haversacks, and every man who had been able to procure a bottle containing spirit of any kind, from Neekar down to plain Odeassee beer, produced it, and the quaihs of wood and horn were passed round from man to man without distinction, in the good old northern fashion ; for the patriarchal system and the acknowledged relationship of the lowest in station to the highest in rank, is one of the finest features in social Highland life. Every Gordon is the kinsman of Lord Huntly, and every Campbell is a cousin to Breadalbane and Macallum Mhor, as the humblest gilly is the kinsman of his chief.

Different from many a bivouac I have seen—where (like the camps of the Egyptians of Scotland or the gitanos of Spain) it seemed to be little better than systematic vagabondizing in the cold and rain, with no covering but a blanket, nestling together for warmth—on this summer evening our halt near that fôrd, which is formed by the long narrow promontory of Helness, resembled a pleasure-party.

We saw the sun set in the amber west, and the moon rise in all her silver glory ; the soft night-wind rustled the leaves above our heads, and bore on its breath that peculiar fragrance which night exhales from the teeming land and darkened sea. Afar off, several beacons of turf and wood were burning on distant promontories, to mark the shoals and sands ; and, amid the summer

haze, they gleamed on the trembling waters of the Belt like flickering *ignes fatui*.

In the lower parts of the level landscape, large pools of water glittered here and there in the rushy hollows; a shower of rain had fallen about mid-day, and now a bright silver haze floated over the enamelled meadows. Near our bivouac a stream gurgled on its way almost noiselessly to the sea, unlike our mountain burns at home, which, after a shower, rush in fury sheeted with foam, and bearing at times rocks, trees, and stones to the German Ocean or the Caledonian Sea.

As the time wore slowly on, and I did nothing in the way of conversation to lighten its tedium, but sat at the foot of a tree lost in thought, old Kildon, as he filled the quaighs of all around him, proposed that we should have a song or a story after the good old fashion at home; and he forthwith set the example by singing, in very good style, that old and dirge-like song which Ossian has addressed to *The Owl*, and which elicited a burst of applause from our soldiers.

"*Aise Mhuir!* let us have a story now," said he, "or we shall all mope here like the owls of the song; come, Phadrig Mhor—tell us a story; or do you, Rollo, tell us something. You did not study at the King's College for naught—and, faith! that same study must have cost the old Laird of the Craig a good many silver bonnet-pieces."

"He is in the region of clouds," said M'Alpine, "and has nothing to tell or propose."

"Except your health, Angus," said I; "and that you will please to tell us why you wear that crape scarf on your arm."

Red Angus started, and a fierce gleam shot athwart his fiery eyes and darkening face.

A murmur of dissent among those near us, warned me that I had breached an unfortunate subject, which some of them knew.

"Pardon my thoughtlessness, Angus," said I, grasping his hand; "if I have probed an old wound, or awakened a bitter memory, by my soul, it was done unwittingly."

"You have probed an old and a deep wound, Philip, and referred to a badge which I never can behold without bitterness and regret. Had you come from among the clans in the west, instead of from those of the north, you had known the story. Kildon, M'Coll, Sir Donald the chief, all knew it, and might a hundred times have told it; but they respected the sorrow and shame of their comrade. Said I shame? Nay, there is in it none to me; then why should I refrain from relating what I have so little reason to conceal?"

Captain M'Alpine filled twice his quaigh with wine, and twice he drained it, with the air of a man who requires false courage.

tell his story, and after twirling his long mustaches, began thus in his native and forcible Gaëlic:—

"Though I am descended from that portion of the Siol nan Alpin which inhabit the frontier of the Highlands, forming one of the greatest barriers against the aggressive spirit of the Lowlander, an ancestor of mine, who had fought under Angus of the Isles, at the great sea battle of the Battle Bay, in Mull, obtained the isle of Gometra as a free gift from the Lord of the Ebuda. There my people dwelt for several generations, and, without going back to the days of Fergus the son of Erc, that is enough to give one consequence in the west.

"The isle was poor and barren, for it lies between the tremendous mountains of Mull and the basaltic cliffs of Staffa, and is separated from the dark blue terraces of Ulva by a narrow strip of ocean. My father's people never took the field under less than a hundred claymores and forty bowmen: they were poor, but honest, brave, and industrious, clothing and feeding themselves by the fruits of their labour—by the loom and the forge, the breeding of sheep, cattle, and horses, and the manufacture of kelp.

"We held our lands of a M'Lean—Hector of Lochdon," added Angus, grinding his teeth; "he dwelt in a castle which had towers and gates; brass cannon and iron bombardes; we occupied a little mansion by the Sound of Ulva. By our tenure, we were required to have always a war-galley in the Sound, but M'Lean had never less than twelve: five hundred brass targets hung in his hall, and a thousand claymores; yet we cocked our bonnets as high as he did; and, unless when under his banner, would never yield an inch to him, at kirk or market—at hunting or hosting.

"To our family was entrusted the education of the successive heirs of Lochdon. We taught them the use of arms, the sword, the oar, the harp, and the bow; with every accomplishment becoming a duine-wassal. All these, four successive generations had acquired at our little dwelling on the Sound of Ulva. I was twenty when my father died——"

"With an arrow in his throat," said M'Coll.

"Ay—shot in a quarrel with the M'Donalds; but he bequeathed to me, as a sacred trust, the chieftain's motherless son, M'Garadh, then in his sixth year, a noble and beautiful boy.

"To enable me to fulfil my charge with honour, and in obedience to my father's special wish, as well as my own, I married the daughter of a kinsman, a brave and honourable gentleman of the isles, whose name I need not sully anew by linking it with mine in this bitter revival of the past.

"Una, for she bore that fine old Highland name, was beautiful,

and every harper between Isla and the Lewis sung of her beauty, and composed songs in her honour. These songs cost her father (for the old man doted on her) not less than a hundred brooches, silver quaighs, and carved dirk-handles; for no cunning harper of the Hebrides strung his harp to Una's praise in vain.

"Una was graceful and tall among the maids of the Isles; the proportion of her form was so perfect, that her height could only be distinguished when she stood among others. Her hair was dark and luxuriant; parted over her forehead, and bound by a fillet of gold, it fell in silky waves upon her shoulders. Her eyes were dark and dangerously beautiful—they were like two stars; her cheek had a transparent olive tint, for her mother had a tinge of the Douglas' blood in her. Her eyes were as if a pencil had traced them, and her nose had that aquiline arch which is ever indicative of pride. When calm and thoughtful, she might have passed for the Malvina of Ossian, or the Goddess of the Parthenon; when smiling, for the Goddess of Love herself. I was proud of my beautiful bride, and I loved her for her gentleness, for the memory of the battles her forefathers had won, and for the lustre which their name, with all her charms and virtues, would cast around my island home.

"Una, alas! had no heart. Her bosom was high and spotless as the new-fallen snow; but it swelled only at the emotions of vanity.

"M'Lean visited us often; and when his great gilded birlinn, with his banner waving, the pipers playing in the prow, the oarsmen chanting as they bent to the wave, the axes of his Leine Chrios sparkling in the sun, swept down the Sound of Ulva, she more than once stung me to the soul by drawing a cold comparison between his state and mine.

"Una was not content. I redoubled my efforts to procure luxuries for her, and exacted a heavy kail from my poor tenants, that I might barter with the English traders for silks and velvets, and with the Norwegians for fine furs and broadcloths; the finest gloves from Perth, the finest laces from Glasgow, the fairest pearls from Cluny, the most sparkling stones from Cairngorm—our Scottish jaspers, topazes, and amethysts—were procured for her. I parted with my father's Spanish gun (which he received from Dunvegan, when he destroyed the *Florida*, the great Spanish treasure-ship)—I parted with my best coat of harness—my polished lurch, with all its rings of steel—to procure for her ornaments and passements, such trumpery and trash as had not been seen in the Isles since the days of Alexander the Great steward.

"We had visited our chief; the splendour and luxuries of his mansion dwelt long in her mind, and my exertions were unavailing.

"Yet I redoubled my efforts, and exchanged my wild ponies

and short-legged cattle for the luxuries brought to the Clyde by the merchants of Bordeaux and the Flemings of the Dam. M'Lean came often to visit us—and always when I chanced to be absent, hunting in Mull, or in my birlinn on the Sound, looking after my fishermen.

"I saw little to suspect; but I dreaded much, and thought more. Una was often pensive, cold, and irritable. Then a pain gnawed my heart, and a whisper that seemed to come from hell ascended to my ear. I was jealous—jealous of this bright being, whom I loved with my whole heart: for I could perceive that, though she sometimes smiled on me, her smile was ever brightest when the birlinn of M'Lean was seen upon the Sound, sweeping down between the isles, with banner flaunting, and oars, shields, and axes flashing in the sun.

"'Una!' said I, one day, making a terrible effort to suppress my rising passion; 'you look after M'Lean as if you had never seen him before.'

"'Ah,' said she, with a smile, 'I know that a Highland matron should only have eyes for her husband—for the man she loves. Surely, dear Angus, you are not jealous of me?'

"'No, Una—true love has no jealousy.' (I knew that I spoke false.).

"'It has—it must—just to infuse a little life into it!'

"Then she playfully kissed my cheek, saying—

"'Now, Angus, I would never suspect *you*, though I have heard that dark men are more constant than fair.'

"'And fair women more constant than dark.'

"'Oh, fie! to say so, dear Angus Roy, after my pretty compliment.'

"My heart leaped within me; methought I was a wretch to suspect her; and, taking my gun, I climbed the western cliffs of the isle in quest of a great golden eagle, which had then built an eyry there, and the yellow pinions of which I resolved to bring Una, though at the risk of my neck.

"It was *Di Donich*, or St. Duncan's day, as we call the Babbath in the west, from some great missionary of the olden time; and I remember it well, as if every hour of it had passed but yesterday. I was long away; when, descending towards my house on the beach, I heard the sound of pipes and the song of the rowers. A turn of the rocks brought me in view of the azure Sound, then tinged red with the flush of a western sun; the bannered barge of M'Lean was speeding across as fast as the broad flashing blades of twenty oars could carry it. M'Lean was at the stern, and a lady sat beside him. Anxiety and fear must have sharpened my vision; for, even at the vast distance between, I could recognise the dark hair of Una, bound by its fillet of gold, and, among the green tartans of the M'Leans, her scarlet

plaid, with its bridal brooch, that shone like a star. That brooch I had placed upon her shoulder at the altar. It was indeed my wife; she had left me! I was alone upon the rock—and the fury of a demon swelled up within me.

"I levelled my gun at Una, but my heart failed me; then I pointed it at M'Lean, but withdrew it from my shoulder; for the distance was too great. I sat down on the hillside and wept like a deserted child. Long I lingered there; the daylight faded from the ocean, and its tints of gold and blue deepened into black; the moon rose, and waned again; the shadows of night melted into the light of day—but, alas! I was still sitting there. The sun came out of the waters, and his rays shed a roseate tint on Ulva's brows of rock, and the loftier peaks of Mull; while that beautiful island, with its deep inlets, its rock-built castles, and grey old Scandinavian burghs, raised by the long-haired warriors of Ivar and Acho, were before me; but I saw only one spot in all that line of coast. It was the tall grim tower of M'Lean.

"Upon the solitary shore, with no eye upon me but the blessed one of God, with my knees on the sand, and the dirk on my lips—the Holy Iron—I swore by the black stones of Iona, by the grey rock of M'Gregor, by the four blessed Gospels, and by my own soul, a terrible vow, to revenge myself upon M'Lean, and to make his hand the means of punishing Una. I remembered the proverb—that deeds are men, and words are women; but I was resolved that *my deeds* should make me little less than a fiend.

"My people met me with shame, with anger, and with silent sorrow; there were some who showed the wounds they had received from the Leine Chrios of M'Lean, for they had manfully resisted the departure of my wife, and blows had been given, and arrows shot, before that abduction—to which she consented with a willingness she was at no pains to conceal—had been effected. A savage thought seized me.

"'By the soul of Mary! I have still a hostage!' said I; 'where is M'Garadh—the cub of yonder wolf?'

"'The M'Leans were too wary to trust the child among us after the deed of yesterday, and he is away with his father in the birlinn.'

"I gnashed my teeth with rage, for I knew that M'Lean loved the boy—the hope of his house—even as his own life, and more. But why protract this story? among you there are many who know it but too well. It has an echo yet in Mull; for there my vengeance gave a name to a mountain which, as yet, had been unnamed since Time began.

"I was too true a son of Alpin to take unwary measures. I bided my time for revenge, and the time came, though slowly; for the passing fishermen of Aros, the traffickers of Tobermory, and the pilgrims who came to drink of St. Mary's well (from

which that elachan took its name), told me how Una had lost all sense of shame and honour; and, to the eternal disgrace of her father's name and mine, was living with M'Lean, even as Fair Helen lived with Paris. Her aged father sent a duinewassal, proposing to lend me four hundred swordsmen, three brass cannon, and ninety archers, if I wished to assail M'Lean under his roof-tree; but I declined, for the men of Mull were too many for us, and I brooded over a deeper revenge.

"M'Lean proclaimed a great hunting-match, and it took place on St. Duncan's day—exactly one year after Una had left me. All the men of Mull were there; M'Coll of that Ilk, the M'Donalds of Aros, the M'Leans of Duairt and those of Lochbny. As a poor fisherman from Lochlinnhe, disguised in bonnet, kilt, and plaid of undyed wool, with a long beard, and a face so pale and wan, that not even Una would have known me, I mingled with the hunters. For three days the sport continued, and one great stag—the prince of the island—after escaping many a spear, bullet, and arrow—after flinging the strongest of the grey dogs aloft on its branching antlers—and after swimming Loch Uisc and Loch Ba, was slain by my foe at the foot of a great hill which overlooks a narrow valley, above which it rises on pillars of basalt, two hundred feet in height. He laid the horns at the feet of Una, who, regardless of the darkened brows, averted faces, and muttered reprehensions of the Highland chieftains, was queen of the chase, and presided at the feast on the greensward, where a thousand men sat down to banquet on the fruits of their prowess, while the war-pipe and harp, the usquebaugh, the ale of the Lowland bodachs, and the wine of the Frenchman and Spaniard, made the merriment ring between the mountain peaks.

"I alone was sad. A snake was in my breast. Una sat beside M'Lean, and with painful acuteness my eye saw every movement of both. When their hands touched, or their eyes met, my heart seemed to burn, and my pulses beat like lightning. I knew that there was a glare in my eye, and a terrible expression in my face, that would discover me, and reveal the wild thoughts of murder and assassination that were rising in my heart; and yet my Una was so beautiful, her smile was so full of fascination, and her deportment so full of unstudied grace, that, though I might loathe, I could not wonder at M'Lean for loving her, and robbing me of a being so adorable. But Hector of Lochdon, with all his barbarous magnificence, could never love as I—her husband—loved her.

"His son, the little boy M'Garadh, recognised me through all my disguise, my agony of visage, and outward change; and, creeping to my side, he clambered into my arms. As if he had in my own, I loved this child; but now I felt something

strange fluttering about my heart, and with a pang that hovered between the throb of pleasure and the thrill of rage, I clasped the boy to my breast; and then, holding him aloft in one hand and my naked dirk in the other, I sprang with a wild shout from the sward where the hunters were carousing, and rushed up the side of the mountain.

"'Tis M'Alpine!' cried a hundred voices; 'tis Red Angus of Gometra!' I soon reached a shelf of overhanging rock, some ninety feet above the hunting-party, and there I paused.

"M'Lean—Hector of Lochdon!' I cried, with a wild voice and the aspect of a madman, for I felt there was madness in my brain, and the emotions of a devil in my heart; 'from the summit of this rock I will dash your son to its foot, if you slay not the infamous woman who sits beside you!'

"Shoot—shoot!' he exclaimed; 'to your bows and hand-guns! Aid me, M'Coll—Aros—Duairt, and Lochbuy!' But these chiefs looked darkly on, and made no response.

"Dost thou pause, villain?' I cried again; 'then hear me.—I swear by the four blessed gospels of God, by the Holy Iron, and by the grave of Alpin, that I will dash this screaming child brainless at your feet, if you do not—this instant—and with your own hand, slay the wretch who sits beside you!' I swung the fair-haired child above my head, and his cries came faintly downward to his father's ear. Then could I feast my eyes upon that father's agony; as trembling in every limb, with sword unsheathed, he gazed alternately upward at me and downward at his pallid and voiceless paramour, who bowed her beautiful head like a lily to the blast, and had bared her white bosom to the impending steel; for well she knew that M'Lean loved his boy, the hope of his house, better than her—the tool of guilty pleasure, the plaything of an hour.

"Red Angus!' cried M'Lean, in a choking voice; 'I will restore your wife, and with her yield a thousand head of cattle, a hundred targets of brass, and as many Spanish guns; I will yield you the best farm I possess, with the salmon-fishings of Lochdon, to thee and thine for ever, freely and irredeemably, but spare my boy!'

"Wretch!' I replied—and once more swung the unhappy child aloft—'if thou and all thy posterity yielded to me their possessions on earth, and their share of paradise, I would not spare thy whelp, nor will I now, if thou sparest her who sits beside thee! Once!'

"Shoot—shoot!' he cried to his Leine Chrios.

"Thirty archers bent their bows and drew their arrows to the ear, but relinquished them; thirty long-barrelled guns were levelled at me, but were lowered again, for the gillies feared to shoot the boy.

"'Dost thou hear me?—*twice!*" I cried, swinging the child again, for I was mad, but had no intention of throwing the boy, *alone* at least. I intended to spring down with him, that we might perish together.

"Trembling with terror for the safety of his child, and urged by the fierce persuasions of his Leine Chrios, who considered the life of the heir of more value than the lives of a hundred adulterous women, M'Lean ran his sword into the heart of Una! She bent over the blade and died at his feet.

"From the edge of that frightful precipice I saw the white bosom of my wife, and the blood (red as the cheeks of her tartan plaid) that dyed her yellow kirtle. Then the light left my eyes, the strength of my hands relaxed, and the boy fell from them into the valley below. From that abyss I heard a terrible cry ascend to the summit of the basaltic columns; there was a confused discharge of fire-arms; bullets and arrows whistled about me; I reeled like a drunken man, a swoon came over me, and I remember no more.

"The poor child had been killed. In my madness and helplessness I destroyed him; and, to this hour, the men of Mull call that rocky hill, which had no name before, *Ben Garadh*.*

"Why prolong a tale so painful? Grey dawn was stealing along the narrow Sound and tumbling sea; and morning was reddening the summits of the hills when I awoke, or recovered, to find myself in silence, with honest M'Coll of that Ilk (who now commands our pikes), standing by me, while his men were in the valley below. All the other huntsmen had departed, and taken with them the bodies of the dead. He had protected me at the risk of his life; for our fathers had fought side by side in the same galley, at the battle of the Bloody Bay.

"'You must fly, Angus,' said he; 'for all the Isles cannot afford you long a hiding-place, and the Lowlanders will not receive you.'

"I knew the truth of this, and had no wish to remain where everything was hateful to me. I was outlawed by the Lord Justice-General of Scotland; I was proclaimed a fugitive by the High Court of Justiciary, and my lands were given to the Campbells (of course), for everything in the west that is in want of an owner belongs to *them*. I hid me long in M'Kinnon's cave, and other recesses of the isle, until an opportunity occurred of leaving the place, and joining old Sir Andrew Gray, whose Scottish bands were sailing for Bohemia. The memory of the *Di Donich* will never die but with myself; and in token of the sorrow, the bitterness, and remorse I have endured for the barbarity of my revenge and the unwitting death of the poor

* The Hill of Garadh. This is still a tradition of the Isle of Mull.

child I loved, I have worn this *scarf of crape*, and on many a field and in many a breach, since the battle of the White Mountain, where the walls of Prague rang to the slogan of the Scottish musketeers, down to the battle of Semigallia, when, under the gallant Gustavus, we cut the Poles to pieces, I have worn this mark of mourning. Now, gentlemen and brother soldiers," continued Angus, heaving a deep sigh as he filled his quaigh from Kildon's brandy-bottle, "you have heard my story; pray tell me if ever—ha! what is that?"

A pistol-shot, followed by the low faint cry of a woman, came towards us on the night wind. Every man looked in his comrade's face, and listened.

The cry, with the impression made upon me by M'Alpine's horrid story, brought a deadly chill over my heart; but I unsheathed my claymore, exclaiming—

"To your arms, and follow me!"

The whole party snatched up their muskets, and rushed through the thicket, in the direction from whence the cry seemed to come.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE PISTOL-SHOT.

A few pages back, we left Bandolo the scout, and Bernhard his fellow-ruffian, confronting each other with knife and pistol, not sixty yards from where we were quietly seated on the grass, listening intently to the story of Angus Roy M'Alpine. Bernhard's heart was swollen with rage, but fear of Bandolo repressed it; for he knew all that personage was capable of; and, moreover, that he would require at least one-half of the expected reward for the only good act the woodman had ever performed—yea, since he left his cradle in infancy.

"For this girl you are to get about the value of eight hundred ducats?"

"Yes," growled Bernhard. Bandolo laughed, and replied—

"I dare say Merodé would give another thousand to have her back again; but that is a slender chance. We shall then have four hundred ducats each—is it not so, camarado?"

"No—it is not so," said Bernhard hoarsely; "you have no right to dictate to me in this matter. I never marred your little plots or speculations; leave mine to the event of fortune. Now stand aside, or by—"

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed Bandolo, standing right in the centre of the narrow path, while Gabrielle clung to a tree, for terror had quite unnerved her.

"Schelm!" growled Bernhard, "do you know that a party of Christians, Scottish musketeers, are within pistol-shot?"

"Yes; and that, by firing one of these, I could at the same moment summon them and blow out your brains, which I shall assuredly do if you utter a cry or sound."

Inflamed by sudden fury, Bernhard made a spring at Bandolo, knife in hand; but he was hurled back like a boy by the more powerful ruffian; and one touch of the cold pistol barrel against his face was sufficient to curb the emotion that sprang from avarice.

"Then you will not divide with me?"

"No—I will rather see you in the lowest pit of——."

"Time enough, Bernhard, my camarado; we may see each other there yet. But why do I chaffer here, and what are four hundred despicable ducats to the sum I lost in that cottage near Eckernförd?"

At this recollection a gleam seemed to shoot athwart the savage eyes of Bandolo; his livid face became convulsed by the emotions of an enraged and ferocious heart; and he spoke in broken sentences.

"Hear me, camarado! I have to punish thee for robbing me of a thousand ducats——"

"I swear that Merodé never gave them to me!"

"Silence! I have to punish Ernestine, the count's daughter, for robbing me of my hard-won gold and treasury-bills, and for leaving me like a fool, drugged, senseless, and snorting, for two days in Fraü Krümple's hut; I have to punish Carlstein, for riding over me like a dog in the streets of Vienna, without a word of pity, because he knew me to be Bandolo. (Ha! did not that name bring one thought of terror to his haughty heart?) I have to punish the Scottish Captain Rollo, for wounding, discovering, and disarming me—for insulting me, and crossing my purposes, and marring my profits on a hundred occasions; last of all, I am not to be outwitted by a mere animal like thee; and thus I rob thee of thy ducats, and avenge myself like Bandolo the Spaniard—like the man I have always been!"

He levelled a pistol at Gabrielle, but it flashed in the pan; and that flash showed her a face that froze her very blood; for the pallid and distorted visage of the Spaniard, with his inflated nostrils, and sharp jackal-like teeth, made him resemble a fiend—a vampire—anything but a man. Yet she sprang forward, and said in a piercing voice, while clasping her trembling hands, and bending upon him a timid and imploring smile—a smile that would have fascinated the most ascetic saint, and softened even the heart of a Nero—

"Ah, Spaniard, you cannot have the heart to kill me! I never hurt you wrong."

Bandolo laughed like a hyena, and cocked his second pistol; then she uttered a wild cry, and hung upon his arm, saying—

“Spare me—spare me! Do not kill me—I am too young to die—I must see my sister—do not kill me—none shall know—none shall hear! Spare me, and you will be rewarded—my father—my sister—”

The bright flash of the pistol was followed by a dull, but terrible sound; the barbarian had shot her dead, and she fell quivering at his feet. Unfortunate Gabrielle!

“Now go to Hesinge—to the Schottlanders—and get your eight hundred ducats, or so much as this carrion is worth!” said Bandolo, as he sprang through the thicket, and vanished.

Fear, the first impulse of the guilty and the vile, impelled Bernhard also to fly, and it was not until the next day at noon, that he presented himself among us at Hesinge, and explained circumstantially the particulars of a deed of barbarity so wanton, that I believe it has few parallels in the annals of crime.

Rushing from our bivouac, with swords drawn and muskets cocked, we scattered through the wood, seeking for the source of the cry and the shot we had heard. Soldiers’ eyes are accustomed to scan and recognise objects even in the gloomiest night; thus Angus Roy first found Gabrielle, and like the sound of a trumpet his Highland “hallo!” drew us all to the spot.

I shall never forget my emotion on beholding the poor girl’s body, stretched at full length on the grass, and quite dead, but still warm, though the blood was flowing profusely from a terrible wound under the right ear; for through there the ball had passed, departing by the back part of the head. She must have died on the instant.

The blood soon ceased to ooze; her jaw fell, and her once merry blue eye became glazed and dim. Ernestine was now my sole thought. I anticipated all she would suffer; and my sympathies for the once happy and child-like being who was gone were mingled with pity for the survivor. I knew that she would, indeed, be lonely now!

It was a dreary place where Gabrielle lay, and, bedabbled in blood, her bright golden hair was spread among the rank, luxuriant grass.

With something akin to terror, I contemplated our return to Hesinge, and for a time felt completely bewildered. Our sternest clansmen all shared my emotions, though of course in a less degree; and while Phadrig Mhor and two others remained by my side, Angus M’Alpine, with the rest, scoured the whole vicinity, without meeting a single person whom they could in any way implicate in the terrible catastrophe of the night.

“Be patient, sir,” said Phadrig Mhor, seeing how deeply I was moved; “be patient—for this is the dispensation of God.”

"From his blessed hand there never came a blow so cruel!" I replied, bitterly. "O for the power of magic to discover, to reach, to punish the author of this dire calamity!"

"Let us make the poor corpse look as comely as possible," said Phadrig, "lest we needlessly shock the poor lady at Hesinge."

"Comely!" said I.

"By washing the gore from her beautiful hair--oiehone! and her neck, poor innocent!" A big tear trembled on the sturdy sergeant's eyelashes. "She often spoke very kindly to me, sir," he added.

"I thank you, Phadrig, for the gentle and delicate thought," said I; "get me some water."

The honest fellow ran to an adjacent runnel, and brought me some water in his bonnet. I knelt down, and tore my white silk scarf (we all wore Scottish scarfs), and bathed the face, neck, and hair of Gabrielle. I closed her eyes, and arranged her luxuriant tresses about her head, so as to conceal that terrible wound from whence her pure spirit had gone to happier regions. I dropped more than one hot tear upon her pallid face, as I kissed her cold lips with all the affection of a brother, and spread my tartan plaid over her.

It would have been a fine subject for a picture--that poor girl's body lying lifeless on the ground, and the grim group of kilted soldiers standing gravely and sadly around it, leaning on their muskets; and some there were, whose eyes, though dimmed by honest emotion, had looked on many a battle-field--stout fellows, who would march to the cannon's mouth, but were now recalling those prayers for the dead which their Highland mothers had taught them in other times, when James of Jerusalem and Father Ignatius had preached to the Catholic clans.

When all our party had returned, a bier was formed, by stretching my plaid between two sergeant's halberds; and thus the remains of Gabrielle were borne by Phadrig Mhor and Gillian M'Bane towards our cantonments.

All who, like myself, have marched between Helmsland and Hesinge, must have remarked a little roadside tavern near the head of the bay.

There we first carried the body, and after procuring a more suitable bier, set out on our mournful journey for Hesinge.

How can I describe the grief of Ernestine!

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CHAPTER LXXVIII.

THE MIDNIGHT FUNERAL.

ERNESTINE had been watching our approach from a window. It was some time before she recovered from the stupefaction into which the appearance of the body of Gabrielle, and the relation of our terrible narrative (which then wanted the unity that after-inquiries have enabled me to give it), had plunged her. As yet one of the principal actors had not come forward; thus, the cause of Gabrielle's death was involved in a mystery, alike perplexing and impenetrable.

"All is over now!" said Ernestine; "all is over now! My father—my father—let me reach my father's side, and then die too!"

Grief affected her by alternate fits of bitterness and calmness. At one time she was somewhat composed in her woe; at others, she flung herself upon her knees beside the bed on which the body lay (the same bed whereon her sister's slayer so nearly assassinated herself), and fondly kissed her again and again; playing with the masses of golden-coloured hair, that streamed over the pillow, with the pretty but pallid fingers that still yielded to her touch—arranging, and re-arranging her dress, uttering the while many a piteous endearing epithet, with many of those pious and beautiful exclamations of hope and woe which the prayers of her Catholic preceptor had taught her.

"It is my own Gabrielle come back to me, after all! God has sent her to me, that once more I might take a sister's fond farewell of her. But God has been very cruel to me! Oh! what do I say? No, no—he has taken you to Himself—you are now among the angels in heaven, sister; you were too good for this bad world! You are happy, and I must not grudge you to Him, who will one day require me too."

"She will know how kind you are to her," said Phadrig Mhor, who, being a Catholic, had earnestly begged leave to say his prayers at the foot of the bed, where he knelt down, and behind his bonnet was making very wry faces to conceal his sorrow, for grief easily affects the hearts of the brave and honest; "she will indeed, lady, for the dead know all that passes here."

There is something sacred in grief. We all withdrew, and at her own request left Ernestine along with the body for a time.

With a delicacy of sentiment that charmed me, she would not allow either the hostess of the inn, or any other woman, to assist her in arranging the remains of the poor child (for in many things Gabrielle was but a child) for the grave. She knew whose hands Gabrielle would have preferred to perform this sad and solemn, this last duty of affection; and thus, unaided, she

lifted and laid her in the coffin, tying her consecrated medals round her neck, laying a chaplet of white roses on her brow, and a crucifix upon her breast; she concluded by repeatedly reading aloud, with a broken voice, those prayers which the church in whose tenets she had been reared directs shall be said for the dead.

These little offices, the pleasing dictates of mingled affection and religion, soothed and occupied her mind; and I could not help thinking how much the ideas inculcated by the ancient faith (whether derived from paganism or not), were calculated to rob the grim tyrant of his terrors, rather than, like our Scottish customs, to invest him with others more appalling.

I beheld her with admiration, and her faith and fervour stirred a thousand deep and pious thoughts within me. The memory of those two days at Hesinge is full of pain; for we spent one day more, Ian delaying his march in consequence of this melancholy catastrophe, over which I mean to hurry as briefly as possible.

It appeared at times impossible to *realize* the conviction, that our poor Gabrielle had passed away, or now existed only in memory!

During nearly an entire day I sat with Ernestine beside the body, which was to be buried at midnight in the old village church close by. As the dusk of evening stole on, strange alternations of light and shadow fell on the beautiful face of the dead girl, giving it at times a most life-like expression. Then it would seem as if the features moved, and, but for her awful placidity, I could have imagined that, in her old spirit of waggery, the pretty Gabrielle was mocking us all. Though my brother-soldiers mourned for the untimely end of the poor young girl, I thought they should all love her as much as I did; for sorrow is sometimes unreasonable; and the easy indifference with which they continued their military duties, made me indignant at them all. But they felt like soldiers. Their first impulse was to have Merodé punished, and after considerable disputation among the officers as to who should have the honour of effecting this, unknown to me lots were cast in Ian's helmet under the *Green Tree*, and it fell to the stout old Laird of Kildon to challenge Merodé to advance one hundred paces from the gate of Helmesland, and, after exchanging four pistol-shots on foot or horseback, to decide the contest by the sword; but the necessity for immediately marching by daybreak prevented this desirable rencontre from taking place. Had it been, sure am I that the white-haired Mackenzie had cut the German count into pieces.

The whole regiment attended the funeral, which the rank of Gabrielle required should take place at midnight.

It was a strange and striking scene! The coffin of that young being, once so happy and so full of life, with a chaplet of white lilies on its lid, borne on the shoulders of four tall Highland soldiers, preceded by the village girls in white, and old Torquil Gorm, with his pipes, pouring to the still midnight a slow and subdued lament; our bronzed and scarred officers in their picturesque arms and garb following close behind, with the veiled form of Ernestine in the midst—all this was seen, be it remembered, by the lurid and uncertain light of twenty torches carried by Highland soldiers.

The night air was soft and mild; no moon was visible, but occasional red stars shot across the sky, and the pale northern lights were gleaming at the far and flat horizon. The leaves of the old yew-trees, the grass of the graves, and the flowers that bordered the churchyard path, were gleaming in dew; and the grotesque architecture of the massive and ancient porch, the low-browed arches of every window and aisle, were bathed in red and wavering light, or rounded into deep and gloomy shadow, as the funeral train swept slowly down the centre of the church, preceded by a minister of the Lutheran faith, a venerable Dane, clad in a white surplice and embroidered stole, with a large brass-bound Bible in his hand. He was an aged and silver-haired man, whose thin wan *haffets* glittered in the light of the uplifted torches. There was no sound but the sputtering of the latter, and the sobs of Ernestine, who leant upon my arm.

The coffin, which was placed upon a bier above the grave, emitted a hollow sound as it was deposited. Then I felt Ernestine tremble. That faint but terrible sound vibrated among the chords of her desolate heart.

I remember still the words of the burial-service, the solemn and beautiful prayer for the innocent dead; but the memory of that midnight funeral floats before me wavering and indistinctly, like a half-forgotten but impressive dream. The yawning grave and the descending coffin; the sputtering torches and the green tartans; the glittering cuirasses and sunburnt faces of my comrades; the grey and grotesque columns of the old Danish church; the veiled figure that knelt in a paroxysm of prayer and grief beside the closing tomb, from which she would be far away to-morrow; the kind and solemn face of the old village pastor, as he covered it with his sleeve, bowed his aged head, and closed his book; the jarring sound of hasty shovels; the deposition of a large stone; the quiet and slow departure of the many; the lingering of the few, who seemed loth to leave the sobbing and sorrowing sister. The torches by that time were extinguished, and all was over.

All seemed to be a fantasy—a thing that could not be; and the idea that haunted me was, that Gabrielle *should* meet us at

our return. But, alas! there was nothing in the little chamber to indicate her former presence but the outline of her coffin, which still was impressed upon the bed; and, on seeing that, poor Ernestine fainted.

As her elder kinsman, Ian had held the principal cord of the coffin; thus it was by the hand she loved best that the head of poor Gabrielle was lowered into her early grave.

Book the Twelfth.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

HELSINGÖR.

It was a relief to us all when day dawned, for the great event of the night had sorely damped our spirit. The funeral was not over before an early hour; Fritz, Ian, M'Alpine, and I sat under the *Green Tree*, drinking hot sack by the light of a stable lantern, and when day dawned in the east, and the clouds of night rolled away over Juteland and the Belt, we gladly prepared to march. With the first peep of day our pipers blew the "gathering," and the regiment fell in by companies, in the main street. Munro of Culcraigie had marched with the baggage-wains an hour before.

Ernestine was in Karl's carriage, and was accompanied by her female attendants, while our preacher, doctor, fourrier, and such other gentlemen as had no place under bâton, rode by the side of the wheels. Just as the sun rose above the horizon, we marched from Hesinge, with the shrill fifes playing and merry drums rattling to the old air, *Put up your dagger, Jamie*.* Thus, with all the glitter of military display, and its greatest accessory, martial music, we left for ever that old Danish village of Odenzee, and its melancholy associations.

Next day we reached Nyeborg, a town strongly fortified, but falling into ruin; the old castle of four towers, which Christian III. enclosed by bastions of earth, was untiled, and hastening to decay. From thence we crossed the Great Belt, which was rough and stormy, and landed at Korsör, a poor-looking town, having an ancient fortress. From thence we continued our route towards Elsinour (or Helsingör), where we arrived after an easy march of five days, during which there occurred nothing of any consequence save an occasional quarrel with the boors.

* Now known as "My love she's but a lassie yet."

On the route I had many opportunities of paying to Ernestine all those little attentions which gallantry inculcates, and affection inspires. The constant change of scene, for each night we halted in a different town, kept her mind employed, and drew her away from her own sorrows; but still they would recur, again and again, with greater force, because she had permitted herself to be for a time comparatively placid.

The only scene in Zealand that elicited an observation from her was the royal forest of Sora, and its pretty town, which stood on the margin of a deep dark lake, dotted by snow-white swans. We approached it by a bank, which was laid across a marsh and formed a roadway, bordered on each side by trees, and terminated by a gate.

If some of my brother officers had not acquainted Major Fritz of the tenor of my intimacy with Ernestine, no doubt the condolences and attentions he would have bestowed on a girl so attractive, would have been overpowering and intrusive; but though the gallant musketeer of Sleswig was enchanted by her beauty, he was compelled to keep his vivacity and admiration within the narrow bounds allotted by the most frigid politeness; or I believe he knew that I was one whose temper would not brook much trifling. Still he could not restrain his propensity to jest, and was wont to say at times, when we were smoking a pipe together on the march, or sipping a can of wine at a halt—

"Ah—oh!—I see how it is, devilish well; one does not require the eyes of Argus for that."

"For what, Herr Major?"

"That we shall not be long in cantonments before you will omit something in the way of matrimony; though a wife is a deuced incumbrance to a soldier of fortune. In fact, long before we fight our way to Vienna, I expect to see you the delighted father of a little brood of bare-legged Scots, subsiding down into a staid old fellow, and a pattern of all the domestic virtues."

"In these I shall never be rivalled by *you*, Fritz."

"Der Teufel, no! If I have my pipe and my horse, my sword and a few dollars in my purse, a friend to chat to, and an occasional pretty girl to toy with, the world, and all the domestic virtues to boot, may go and be hanged for aught that I would care."

Three miles from Elsineur the brave old King of Denmark came on horseback to meet us, accompanied by his Live Knecht, the Count of Rantzau, the Barons of Klosterförd, Føycø, and other knights of the Armed Hand. This stout monarch, who was still as keen an admirer of beauty as when a stripling of eighteen, first paid his respects to Ernestine, and, alighting from horseback, stood hat in hand at the door of the calèche.

Unaware of all that had happened, he asked where her "pretty sister was."

Then Ernestine could no longer restrain her tears, and told her sorrowful story.

King Christian's solitary eye glistened at her narrative. He kissed her hand, and then patted her on the head, as a father would have done; for though a king, and one as brave as ever wore a crown or drew a sword, he was a good old soul.

"Poor child!" said he; "my heart bleeds for you. but, if possible, forget the past in contemplating the future. We cannot alter it; even the great Master of heaven and earth himself, with all his power and majesty, though he may avert the evils or change the events of the future, cannot control the past. It is unalterable."

From a hill above Elseineur the view was lively, beautiful, and even impressive. On one side lay the flat and low, but green promontory, grasping the narrow gate of the Baltic, with its white town spreading irregularly along the slope, and overlooked by the square and massive castle of Cronborg, in the vaults of which, the legends say, old Holgier Danske and his long-bearded *Knechts* have been seated round a stone table for centuries; and there the fat and well-fed Danish soldiers hear the occasional clash of their axes and hauberks, during the still dark hours of their midnight guard.

Away on the west stretched the level shore of Denmark, with little tufts of coppice and gentle hills of sand, rising from immense plains, where windmills were tossing their light arms on the breeze. On the east, rough Sweden reared its mighty mountains and tremendous rocks, which the earthquakes and thunderbolts of an antediluvian world had cleft and rent into steep summits, starting boldly and bluffly forward from a sky of blue, and tinted with the rosy light of a setting sun; between these peaks, and beyond them, lay its deep dark vales and old primeval woods, its vast lakes and foaming rivers; its scenery stern and magnificent, like that of our mother Caledonia.

The setting sun was gilding the copper roofs of the four large turrets or corner towers of Cronborg, and throwing their shadows far upon the azure waters of the Sound, then dotted by the white sails of many a passing ship. I remember to have seen an original letter, written from this castle, by his Majesty James VI. to Alexander Lord Spynie, anent the erection of the bishopric of Moray into a temporal lordship.*

Five casemated bastions faced the landward, and one, mounted with cannons-royale, swept the narrow gate, where Christian IV. had again begun to levy an ocean toll upon the ships of all nations. Except those of the Scots, who were in alliance with

* The letter referred to by Capt. Pello, is now among the Denmylne MSS.

Denmark, every vessel lowered her topsail, and showed her flag for five minutes, or a cannon-shot came booming upon her from Cronborg. This toll was originally exacted on account of certain buoys, by which the Danish government marked the dangerous shoals, and for certain lights burned upon the coast by night. Previous to 1582, England paid a rose-noble for every ship that passed the Sound, and her vessels lowered their topsails; but in consequence of the double marriages and ancient friendship between Denmark and Scotland, the ships of the latter nation passed the fort with St. Andrew's ensign flying and all their sails set.

At the gate of Helsingör we were met by our colonel, Sir Donald Mackay, who, with five hundred good recruits, had arrived from Scotland three days previous. As we marched in, with pipes sounding, drums beating, and colours flying, these recruits mingled with our ranks, in search of friends and relations, brothers and kinsmen; and there arose a clamour of joyous congratulations, mingled with exclamations of sorrow, for many a man who was missing, and whom the new-comers had hoped to see and to greet.

Some inquired for brothers and fathers, and were answered that they were lying in their graves at Bredenburg, the Boitze, at Eckernfiörd, or other places. These announcements cast a shadow over their obstreperous joy; while the news they brought us from Scotland were of the most varied description, and led us to believe, that ere long all our swords and our valour would be required to vindicate the rights and the dignity of Scotland against her native prince, and his meddling subjects of England.

Sir Donald handed me a letter from Dominie Daidle, who had prayed him, when passing through Cromartie, to deliver it to me, "if he found me in the body." It was written, as the dominie said, by the express order of the laird, my father, who (poor man!) was no deacon at penmanship.

All were in good health at Craigrollo; all congratulated me on my promotion to the command of a company, and so forth. Even my father was beginning to take an interest in my success, and regretted my absence. "The muckle spune—" but here the dominie had drawn his pen through the words, as if he had changed his mind, and went on with other information. My three brothers had recently had some hard work in recovering certain herds of our cattle, which had been borrowed, sans leave, by the caterans of the Black Isle. In this service, Finlay had received a slash from an axe, and Farquhar a dab from a biotag; but, thanks to Providence, and the salves of old Mhona Toshach, the poor lads were doing well. Then came all the news of the district. Urquhart of Cromartie had won his famous plea anent his niece's tocher before the Lords of Session; but as the justice-general was his kinsman, auld Sir Thomas was

fortunate in *his* pleas. Dalblair had come down the burn-side with four-and-twenty Hielandmen, and burned the tower of his auld enemy, Camstrairy; but had been put to the horn, and was now fled from the kingdom to France or England. The laird of Brea had burned the clachan of St. Martin's, because Gilbert Blakhal, a seminary priest, had been hiding there, and so forth. Then came various messages to soldiers of the regiment. "Tell Alister Glas from Kessock, that his mother received the fifty dollars that he sent; and that his father, pair bodach! mistook another man's kye for his own, and bade farewell to this world at Crieff, last Lammas-tide. Tell Rori Beg, from Brea, that his sister went off with the Egyptians to the Lowlands, and has not since been heard of; but the laird swears he will hang every man and mother's son of them that pass this way in future, for she was the bonniest lass on the barony. Tell Gillian M'Bane, that his brother, the sailor, has been seized and made a slave by the cruel pirates of Barbary, with twenty other mariners of the good ship *Bon Accord*, of Aberdeen, but we raised a subscription here to buy him off, and the laird has given twenty crowns Scots towards the gude work. Kynnoeh, the provost of Forres, was burned yesterday as a warlock and traitor.

"There are doleful troubles brewing in the south," continued the dominie, and "a war with England is confidently looked for. Maist men wish it, for there are sic swarms o' idle callants biding about every hall and homestead—and war must come; for flying rumour saith, that our Scottish clergy have petitioned the king against the Five obnoxious Articles of Perth, and that he hath urged the Archbishop of St. Andrew's to enforce the Episcopal order. The cloud gathers, and the storm groweth. A little while, and we shall see the one darken, and the other burst over the length and breadth of the land. Mark me, Master Philip, a day of dule is coming, when all those gallant Scots who are now fighting the battles of Denmark, Sweden, Bohemia, and Almainie, will be summoned home to protect (against the king and the aggressive English) that holy kirk which Knox and Wishart founded, and those institutions which our forefathers transmitted to us—even as we are bound to transmit them unimpaired to our posterity."

In fact, the acuteness of my old dominie enabled him to perceive those storms then darkening the horizon of Scottish politics, but which, to more superficial observers, were as yet invisible.

Since the death of Gabrielle, Ernestine had become more than ever impatient and anxious to rejoin her father, who (as the king informed her) was now at Stralsund, in command of a brigade of cavalry, and who probably supposed that all this time his daughters had been safely at Falster with the old queen-wager.

Stralsund was now in a desperate state, and no time was to be lost in hastening to its rescue. Thus, in one hour after we entered Elsinour, we embarked on board the fleet, and sailed for the beleaguered city.

Ernestine and her two attendants were the only females on board the king's ship, where, by the judicious management of my friend, the Baron Karl—then acting as quartermaster-general—I had the good fortune to be embarked with my company. For the first time since we left Helsing, I perceived a smile on the face of Ernestine; this was when the vessels were got fairly under weigh, and, squaring their yards to the northern gale, stood down the Sound with all their sails set, just as the sun sank behind the spires of Elsinour.

"I am now fairly on my way to my father," said she.

"And to leave me?"

The smile died away, and she gave me a pleading glance.

She sat long beside me on the deck, wrapped up in a well-furred mantle; nor did she bid me adieu for the night until we were far past the isle of Huen, the residence of Tycho Brahé (and then famous for four castles, said by the Danish legends to have been built by the children of Huenella the giantess), and had reached that part of the straits where they widen to twenty-five and thirty miles in breadth, and the distant spires of Landskrona faded from our view.

After she retired I paced the deck alone (being captain of the military watch), rolled in my plaid, and smoking a German pipe. I was thoughtful, and looked forward, with no pleasant anticipations, to our arrival at the great city of Stralsund; for there I should be separated from Ernestine for a long and indefinite period. Her father and I were the servants of hostile kings; and, though near kinsmen (but, as yet, the count knew not that), were the leaders of soldiers who were the enemies of each other; and all that I could hope for now, was to be favoured with bearing the flag of truce by which Ernestine would be finally guided to the Imperial tents.

Near me a number of our soldiers of the watch were telling stories, and sat in a circle on the main deck, with their plaids and bonnets drawn over their ears. I drew near to listen, and thus wiled away the hours of the night.

Morning came again: another part of the coast and a wider sea were in view. The grey clouds which had veiled the sky, and shed a cold hue on the waters, were rent asunder, as if by the broad wave of some mighty hand—by Odin himself, the king of spells; and through the gap a blaze of saffron light was shed upon the fertile isle of Amack and Zealand's level shores—level save where a little chalky cliff, a venerable tower, or a

clump of trees rose against the sky—part of that long succession of wood-bordered lawns which spread, with villas, cottages, and gardens, along the beautiful but monotonous coast from Elsinæur to Copenhagen.

Opposite, bleak Scania reared up her iron and precipitous front, above which, and amid a pile of purple clouds, the sun was rising; and when these clouds were rolled away towards the north, the sky appeared in all its cold and Swedish purity of blue. At sea one's spirit naturally becomes exhilarated on a fine morning, when, with a beautiful sunrise, the wind is fair, and all the fleet are rolling before it, until their yard-arms almost dip, and we have our friends exchanging signals from the sides of the vessels; but I felt—I know not why—none of that ardour with which I should have hailed our entrance upon such an arena of war and glory as Stralsund: a foreboding of approaching sorrow—conducted probably by the certainty that, within a week at least, I would be separated from Ernestine—oppressed me, and I looked forward with no emotion of pleasure to the day we should drop our anchors on the Pomeranian shore.

Long ere the noonday sun had brightened the rippling water, and tinted with yellow the faint blue Scanian peaks, the towers of Kiöbenhafn, and the turrets of the old castle of Christianborg, faded away or sank into the gulf of Kjöge; the point of Falsterboro' in Sweden rose out of the water, and then we were breasting the short, foamy waves of the Baltic Sea.

CHAPTER LXXX.

STRALSUND.

STRALSUND was now the largest and most wealthy city in the duchy of Pomerania. Boasting of an origin that dated from Sünno II., king of the Franks, and deriving its name from the narrow *Sünd* that lies between it and the Isle of Rügen, it had gradually become a great commercial city, with vast trade and ample privileges, which its burghers had successfully defended against all princes who had endeavoured to subvert or subdue them; and once they had opposed with success and with victory the united arms of Sweden, Denmark, and ten other principalities. From thenceforward the stout burghers were considered unconquerable, and their city impregnable. Jaromar, prince of Rügen, increased the city in 1209, and his son first fortified it; after this its walls became gradually stronger, and there were no less than six gates and as many bridges facing the Sound, which extends one mile in breadth between it and Rügen. To the

landward it was fenced round by regular bulwarks, and the lake of Franken, a falcon-shot in width; over this was a high causeway, with dams and bridges, every approach to which was barred by bastions and cavaliers, mounted by brass guns, and swept by numerous casemates.

Under the Count of Carlstein, a strong brigade of horse and foot lay intrenched before the gate that faced the causeway and lake of Franken. Major-general Arnheim assailed the right flank of the city, and Wallenstein in person pressed it on the left; but Stralsund, being open to the sea, was supplied with provisions from that quarter for a time, as all the shipping sent by Sigismund, King of Poland, to the assistance of the Emperor, had been sunk by the Scottish fleet in the Danish service—thus the Imperial generalissimo of the northern seas had not a single ship wherewith to blockade the harbour.

Colonel Heinrich Holka, whom Christian had appointed governor of Stralsund, with a mixed force of Scottish and Danish infantry, had considerably weakened his resources by neglect; and at the most desperate crisis of the siege, had found time to take unto himself a young and beautiful wife, celebrating his nuptials in a public manner, amid the dismayed and disheartened citizens, and immediately under the shot of the Imperial batteries. This act was deemed alike unwise and, at such a time, improper. Poor Holka was displaced, and Field-marshal Sir Alexander Leslie of Balgonie (in Fifeshire), a cavalier who served the King of Sweden, and whose skill, as displayed in after years in Lower Saxony, and in the ever-memorable wars of the National Covenant, must always mark him as a man of the highest military genius, was appointed to govern, defend, and rescue Stralsund.

Enraged by the affront, Colonel Holka changed banners, and joined the Emperor, who created him a count, and gave him a regiment of infantry. He, moreover, changed his religion no less than three times; but, being seized by the plague, died at last a Protestant, leaving behind him the usual reputation of the Imperialists—that of having been a wealthy, rapacious, dissolute, and ferocious soldier.

On the same evening that Christian, from the westward, sailed into the narrow strip of water between Rügen and Stralsund, a fleet, having the three crowns of Sweden flying at the mast-head of each ship, entered the east end of the Sound, having on board Sir Alexander Leslie, and five thousand of the gallant and well-appointed Scottish veterans of the glorious Gustavus—the Star of the North! When anchoring close beside us, the Swedes opened their red ports and fired a royal salute on learning that King Christian was in the bay. Their sides were lined by men, and

many a cry of welcome, of greeting, and recognition, were joyfully given and warmly responded to. The artillery of the town had no time to salute either of the fleets; for at that crisis the cannoniers of Wallenstein (who on the preceding night had returned from Gustraw) were redoubling their efforts, and his batteries were firing furiously on the city.

It was at that very time, when the united fleets of Christian IV. and Marshal Leslie anchored off the city, that Wallenstein, who from an eminence was watching us through his Galileoglass, swore so impiously—

"By the wounds of God! I will take Stralsund, even if He slung it in chains between the heavens and earth! I will make these Scottish wolves eat each other up, and teach them that Protestantism was buried on the day when I was born!"

And in a burst of angry fervour he kissed a consecrated medal, which had been suspended round his neck when a child by his mother, and which had never since been for a moment from his person. It was one of those said to have been struck at Rome, to commemorate the massacre of St. Bartholomew; but with what truth I pretend not to say:

Shot could not reach the seaward side of the city, therefore we were comparatively safe.

The evening sun was shining on its towers and spires, and on the blue water that reflected them; and by my side stood Ernestine, pale and agitated, between the expectation of meeting her father—of weeping on his breast, and pouring out her tale of sorrow there—and at the necessity for leaving me when about to engage in all the dangers of a desperate siege. She placed her arm through mine, and we stood in silence. I occasionally pressed her hand as if to reassure her and remind her that I was still by her side; and divined her thoughts; which wandered to the faint white line that gleamed afar off in the sunset, and indicated the Imperial tents, visible between some of the openings of that stately city, where so many of our Scottish soldiers fought so nobly, and where, alas! so many found their last home; for the siege of Stralsund was one of the most determined and desperate events of the great German war—the sack of Magdeburg excepted.

In the still evening air the boom of the cannon was incessant on the landward or opposite side of the city; and as the shadows deepened we could distinguish the lurid flashes reddening behind the outline of the spires and houses. Above them, in the blue sky, there hung the mingled smoke of the daily contest, deepening and darkening over the city as a pall—and a veritable pall it was; for under it many a brave fellow found a soldier's death, and a soldier's coffinless grave.

"You still gaze at the Imperial tents, dear Ernestine," said I. Her eyes were full of tears.

"Yes, Philip; for now we must part, and the sooner it is over the better—for the sooner you will see me again. The king is approaching; ask him concerning my transmission—now—now! there is not a moment to be lost!"

I took off my bonnet and approached Christian IV., but paused on seeing our colonel, Sir Donald, in the act of presenting a greyhaired cavalier, who had just come on board. He was plainly accoutred in an unlaced buff-coat and black iron cuirass, over which hung the Swedish order of the Tower and Sword.

"Stay, Philip," said Ian; "that is the great Sir Alexander Leslie, the conqueror of the Poles at Dantzic."

I looked with interest at this remarkable man, whose talent, bravery, and adventurous genius had won him a European reputation, and were yet to make him the founder of a noble Scottish family. He was short in stature, and somewhat decrepit in figure; but had a round and pleasant face, a short beard and mustaches, well pointed up; grey hair shorn short, *à la soldatesque*, and a visage embrowned by constant exposure to the weather.

I heard him acquaint the king of the number of his regiments and their colonels, among whom I remember the Lord Spynie, Colonel Alexander Seaton, and Sir Patrick Ruthven, of loyal and gallant memory.

In the midst of this, Christian's eye had observed me standing bonnet in hand, a little in the background, and he immediately said—

"Do you wish to address me, Herr Captain?"

"Whenever your majesty is at leisure."

"Speak now, Mein Herr."

"The daughter of Count Carlstein, whom your majesty has been pleased to protect, has sent me to beg that you will have the kindness to order her transmission to that part of the Imperial lines where the troops of the count, her father, are cantoned."

"No officer in Stralsund would venture on such a service," said Sir Alexander Leslie, who was pleased to survey me with particular attention.

"Is the duty so sharp here, marshal?" asked the king.

"No man can venture a pistol-shot from the walls, as I am informed by Colonel Holka."

"Desperate though it be," said I, "I will gladly undertake this duty."

"Captain Rollo is one of my best officers," his majesty was pleased to reply; "and I assure you, marshal, that I cannot afford to lose him."

Old Sir Alexander Leslie, who had given a casual glance at Ernestine, and had perceived, as the wind blew her veil aside, that she possessed uncommon personal attractions, gave me a knowing smile, and said—

“Captain, it is alike a moral and physical impossibility to communicate in any way with the Imperialists, who fire indiscriminately upon every one, and shoot all that dare approach their posts, even under cartel. Give my word—the word of auld Balgonie—to the young lady, and say that unless, with woman’s wilfulness, she prefers danger to safety, she cannot now be transmitted to the Imperial camp; but that until her friends become more courteous, until they are vanquished or the city falls, she shall have the best house in Stralsund. Does this meet with your majesty’s approval?”

“In every way, Sir Alexander. You have spoken my thoughts and wishes regarding a charming young lady, whom I pledged my word to protect; and whom I now confide to your care. You have heard, madam, the views of our brave marshal.”

Ernestine bowed with a sweet smile to his majesty, and with the dignity of a queen—a Spanish, and not a German one.

I own this arrangement did not displease me; and, after explaining to Ernestine the impossibility of reaching the Imperial camp at present, I added everything else that might console her. Other ideas came into my head; and it seemed to me that Colonel Holka, in marrying his pretty young wife amid the turmoil of a protracted siege, took neither a bad nor unwise method of solacing himself during the horrors by which he was no doubt surrounded.

These thoughts occurred to me again and again. The advantage that would accrue to Ernestine in having a legitimate protector was quite apparent; but then her sister’s recent death, and her present helpless condition, restrained me from advancing such a project. Moreover, to the count it might seem that an undue advantage had been taken of those peculiar circumstances by which she had been thrown among us so strangely and alone.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

WAR.

“We have sharp service before us here, Ian,” said I, as in the cold grey light of an autumn morning we paraded on deck next day for disembarkation.

"Yes, Philip; and, that omens of coming events may not be wanting, harken to the news brought from the city by Major Fritz!"

"News," said that cavalier, as he assisted his friend Karl to clasp on his cuirass; by my soul, 'tis enough to make one's hair stand on end, and to frighten a troop-horse!"

"Quite a prodigy is it, Fritz?" asked Karl.

"Gentlemen," continued the major, with all seriousness, "the wife of Colonel Dübbelsteirn has just been delivered of a fine little boy——"

"Bah!—and what is there in that?" asked M'Alpine and several of our officers.

"What is there in it!" retorted the Danish major, indignantly; "there is something very remarkable, when we consider the way it came into the world!"

"Has it a tail?" asked Kildon.

"Or horns?" added Culcraigie.

"It is quite unlike any of you," retorted Fritz; "'tis a plump little boy, as fat as Bacchus, or the colonel himself (and we all know that he fully realizes the old Friesland proverb, *Grette arsen behove wyde bræken*). The baby has been born in buff-coat and jack-boots, like a little trooper, and the whole city is ringing with the tidings of so marvellous a birth."

"Buff-coat and jacks—by Heaven, he is laughing at us!" said our Celts, twisting their mustaches.

"I assure you, gentlemen, that it is quite as the major says," said Karl; "but he has omitted to add that this miraculous bantling has the buttons of the Sleswig musketeers on its doublet——"

"A major's scarf," suggested Ian.

"And short brown mustaches," added Karl.

"Laugh as you please, gentlemen—but visit the Fraü Dübbelsteirn, and satisfy yourselves. Ha! the drums are beating,—there sound your pipes, gentlemen Schottlanders, and now for the shore!" *

There was a solemn prayer given by our regimental preacher on deck, where all our soldiers paraded under arms, in full marching order; and he also gave us a brief discourse on that verse of Samuel which records how Saul "gathered a host, smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands that spoiled them," applying it to the rescue of Stralsund from the fangs of the Empire.

* A similar prodigy is said to have happened in the city, stormed soon after by Pappenheim; a child was born in *steel cap and cuirass*! See the "Brief but authentic Relation, in High Dutch."

We then disembarked in the Danish boats, and landed on the mole while the morning sun was yet low, and a dense bank of fog was rolling slowly upward from the strip of water that lay between us and the Isle of Rügen.

Well muffled up in Russian sables, with two female servants nestling beside her, Ernestine was rowed ashore in the barge of Sir Nikelas Valdemar, and the king's own Live Knecht and Baron Karl, the quartermaster-general, were desired to obtain for her a handsome and suitable mansion among the many whose wealthy owners had abandoned them, and fled into Pomerania at the approach of Wallenstein. A residence was soon selected.

The rich hangings, the magnificently carved and gilded furniture, the chairs of white satin, brocaded with gold, the tables inlaid with ivory and ebony; jars of Dresden china, Japan canisters, Persian carpets, flowers in vases of Delft, and statues of Parisian alabaster—all that taste could invent and wealth procure were remaining in this delightful billet, just as the rich corn-trader to whom the house belonged had left them. The rooms were all tapestried or panelled, and each panel was a picture representing Flemish ships and German farms, Dutchmen skating and sea-pieces. The key which put us in possession of all these fine things, was the simple application of a musket-shot to the keyhole, and then the door flew open.

The house was pleasantly situated, having in front a view of the Sound, with the Saxon and Pomeranian shores, while behind it was completely screened from the fire of the Imperial batteries, by the masses of intervening streets. Thick clumps of Dutch poplars, with bright green foliage, half hid the front of the house, which stood a few yards back from the main street. A long flight of steps ascended to its gaudily-painted door, and on each step stood two porcelain vases with flowers in full bloom.

Ernestine was charmed by the appearance of the place; but said that, with all its splendour, she would have preferred a corner of her father's tent.

Other ladies, the wives of fugitive German nobles, were placed in the same house. Thus, in the hope that they would form a pleasant little community, whose safety depended upon our valour, we marched, with drums beating and colours flying, to the Frankendör, the post assigned us; and the scene—as the event proved—of the most hazardous and desperate service in that beleaguered city.

It was the *weakest* point, too; otherwise the old Scottish Invincibles had not got it to defend.

The aspect of the citizens—men who until this time had given their whole souls to peaceful occupations, and to the quiet acquisition of wealth—men whose ledgers had long since superseded

their Bibles—whose God was a mere golden idol; whose whole thoughts were of pounds, dollars, and stivers—hides, tallow, corn and cheese, ships and storehouses; whose passion was wealth, and whose arid hearts had been ossified to mere ink-horns, was pitiable in the extreme. In neglected attire, with wan and dejected countenances, they moved stealthily about, their eyes at times aghast with terror, and always expressive of anxiety and alarm; while surveying ruefully their deserted mole, their places of business thronged by soldiers and encumbered by the munition of war; their best houses and public buildings turned into barracks, or battered, dented, and defaced by cannon-shot; their trees cut down to form abattis; their pavements torn up, and thoroughfares trenched to make parapets, breastworks, and traverses; their market-places ringing incessantly to the tramp of armed troopers, the clank of artillery-wheels, the rattle of drums, and the wild yell of the Scottish war-pipe, as the various duties of defending their beautiful city—now transformed into one vast garrison—were vigorously executed under the orders of Sir Alexander Leslie.

With all the recklessness of foreign soldiers defending a town, about the actual protection of which they cared not the value of a rush, our Danes and Germans destroyed and defaced whatever they could not defile. The churches were turned into hospitals, where the wounded and dying lay side by side upon beds or pallets of straw, presenting a hideous combination of suffering and misery. Chapels were converted into cooking places, where the messmen lighted fires on the pavement; and where the soldiers laughed and sang, as their camp-kettles simmered upon fires that were composed of carved oak-work, altar-screens, pews, pulpits, and whatever came first to hand and bill-hook; and where the flames, thus recklessly lit, blazed above the ashes of the dead, encircling the gothic pillars, licking their foliated capitals, filling the vaulted roofs with smoke, and blackening the fretted stone-work, which they failed to ignite.

In other churches, the Baron Karl's pistoliers and the cavalry were cantoned; and there the long legends and brasses on the pavement, expressive of piety and faith, of human vanity or earthly mortality, as they enumerated the life, the death, and rank of those who slept below, were defaced by horses' hoofs, or hidden by the litter and mire that defiled those stately temples, which had been founded and consecrated in the earlier ages of Christianity by some of those northern missionaries, the relation of whose labours were the theme and the glory of our old friend, Father Ignatius d'Bydel.

We marched to the Frankendör, a ravelin that lay immediately without the walls, and was an indifferent breastwork, before

which lay a dry ditch, having in its front the lake of Franken; on the opposite bank, the brigade of Count Carlstein (old Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume) was securely ensconced, though within less than the distance of a cannon-shot, by trenches and embankments, basketed up for their culverins. These, for the present, were silent; but we could perceive that the Imperialists were busy erecting two *camarade* batteries of ten guns each, to which we could only oppose a species of *tambour* work, which we foresaw would afford us very little shelter unless strengthened.

Wallenstein's line of circumvallation reached the count's left flank; Arnheim's line reached his right: thus the unhappy city had been completely enclosed on the landward side, and cut off from all the supplies it usually received from Mecklenburg, Saxony, and Pomerania.

Major-general Johan Gorge Arnheim, a gentleman of Brandenburg, and director to the Elector of Saxony, had the third command in the army of Wallenstein, and was one of the bravest and most accomplished soldiers in the Imperial army; but to military talents of the highest class he unfortunately united all the craft and dissimulation of a statesman. Hence his treachery to the Poles and to the Swedes on many occasions; till even Wallenstein suspected him of sinister designs against himself, and despatched him from Stralsund, with 10,000 men, to the assistance of Sigismund, King of Poland, who was then at war with Gustavus, dismissing him with this brief and vainglorious order:—

“Arnheim—March! drive Gustavus out of Poland; and, in case you fail, send to tell him that I—Wallenstein—will come and effect it.”

CHAPTER LXXXII.

THE FRANKENDÖR.

SIR ALEXANDER LESLIE, who was designated “Governor of all the cities upon the Baltic coast,” made a rapid and able survey of the whole town; and, for its immediate defence, ordered the erection of new barricades to defend our avenues, and batteries to sweep those of the enemy. Fascines were made and filled with earth; all houses near the gates were loopholed for musketry, and had their lower rooms filled with stones and rubbish, to prevent the passage of the German cannon-shot; while all edifices of every kind that impeded the fire of our batteries or musketry were instantly levelled to the ground.

In every way the Scottish marshal proved himself worthy of

he high trust reposed in him by the allied princes of the north. While some of our soldiers who had been bakers (or, as we call them, *baxters*), were ordered to prepare vast quantities of biscuit for the garrison and the citizens, others were employed in making up ball-cartridges, cannon-baskets, platforms, and other military works. New wells were sunk, the old repaired, and tanks were filled with water, while the hospitals were cleaned out and purified. Amid all this lively bustle—which was a severe reprehension on the inertness of Colonel Holka—the poor citizens forgot the horrors of their two months' siege, and worked among our soldiers with ardour and satisfaction.

Wallenstein was aware that 5000 Scots had entered the city under Leslie, whom he knew to be the most able general of the great Gustavus. He was also aware, by what he knew of Leslie's military character, acuteness, and resources, that, unless crushed, he might be foiled before that city he had so solemnly sworn to win; thus, taking advantage of the unusual commotion within it, he made a fresh reconnaissance, and, observing that the Frankendorf was the weakest and least defensible post, resolved on assailing it during that night.

Our soldiers were bivouacked within this ravelin that overlooked the Frankenlake. There I had left them for an hour to visit Ernestine; but the hour gradually extended from one to two, and from two to three, and the church clocks, which still survived the various bombardings of the last few weeks, were just striking the hour of eleven, on the 24th of June—a day by old memories the dearest to a Scottish heart—when the report of two heavy cannon fired from the citadel peeled over the roofs and streets of the unfortunate town, announcing a night attack.

The thought flashed like lightning upon me, that the regiment might be engaged—that I had been three hours absent, and that Sir Donald might miss me from my post. Thus, to start up, to snatch my sword and steel-bonnet, to press my lips to the pale cheek of Ernestine, and hurry into the street, were all the work of a moment, and I was away!

A storm was raging, and though the season was summer, and the month was June, it was a severe one. A torrent of rain had fallen, and a tempest of wind had swept over the city, levelling many of the shattered houses on the stray passengers and on our working parties; but I had been so pleasantly occupied during my *tête-à-tête* with Ernestine, that I had heard nothing of it; and now, on issuing into the street, I was surprised to find it covered by puddles of mud and water, while dust, fragments of tiles, and wet leaves were swept past me on the hurrying wind. Dark clouds enveloped the sky, and after pausing for a moment in the dark and unlighted thoroughfare, irresolute which way to turn, the report of a volley of musketry drew me towards a part of the

long and deserted way, by which I reached the Frankendör, arriving just in time to find my comrades about to be engaged, and our drums beating the *Point of War*. Being wetted by the rain, their sound was dull and hollow, but the wild pipes were shrill and high as ever.

Though the scenery was flat and level, there was something impressive and terrific in the storm, and the night was so dark that, when I assumed command of my company, at one of the faces of the ravelin, I could not discern the enemy.

Before us lay the dark bosom of the Frankenlake; above was a black and stormy sky, where enormous masses of vapour were rolling and intermingling on the wings of that squalling wind, which swept over Stralsund in loud and incessant gusts. The rain had ceased, and there was at times a close, oppressive, and sulphurous heat.

Suddenly, like a mighty gorge between two black mountains, the clouds were divided in heaven; a lambent light edged with brilliance their torn and rugged outlines, and the forked lightning was shot from the opening, like long red arrows of fire.

For a moment, while these levin brands were lighting earth and heaven with their ghastly glare, we could distinctly perceive the bastions of the ravelin and the ranks of the regiment, for all its bonnets of steel and bright musket-barrels glittered in the gleam above the stone parapet and redoubts of turf. I could see the strong beeches bending like willows before the breath of the sweeping storm, the turgid waters of the Frankenlake, and the countless bright points—helmets, pike-heads, and musket-barrels, cuirasses and standards, of two vast columns of infantry, that moved stealthily round each flank of its margin, to assail on two quarters the post we had orders to defend to the last—the Frankendör—the most untenable, and the weakest redoubt in the whole city of Stralsund.

The lightning passed away; the bright edges faded from the clouds, and the bosom of the lake and all its banks vanished into darkness as instantaneously as they had become visible; but we had seen enough to acquaint us with the force, disposition, and intentions of the foe.

The thunder then rattled in deep hoarse peals across the sky, and died away in echoes over the Isle of Rügen and along the Pomeranian shore.

"Now, my brave lads—cock up your bonnets!" cried Sir Donald, whose deep and powerful voice rose above even the howling of the stormy wind; "tis the enemy—the Imperialists, who mean to beat up our quarters, and have sworn to beat us out of them; so let us give these gentlemen a good account of ourselves. Musketeers—look to your pouches and hammer-lls."

These leather covers, by which our men protected their locks and matches from rain, were instantly unstrapped from the muskets, the pouches were opened, and I could perceive the red glowworm-like gleam, as each musketeer lit his match at his comrade's lock, and all stood ready to fire upon the enemy, waiting only for the order in silence, and amid a stillness broken only by the sweeping gusts.

Another gleam of light shot between an opening in the clouds, and we saw the advancing columns nearer still—so near that their ladders, and other paraphernalia of escalade, were visible. Then the colonel spoke to the pipers who stood by his side, and he *onset* burst from their instruments; but the scream of the hanters and bray of the drones were lost and drowned in the roar of the musketry, for seven hundred barrels of steel were levelled at once over the parapet, and seven hundred flashes of red fire burst at once upon the murky night. Again the arms were loaded, and the rattle of iron ramrods and brass butts—the rustle of charging home the cartridges, casting about, blowing matches, and priming pans, became incessant; and with no other light to guide them than the occasional gleams of lightning, our soldiers poured volley after volley on those close ridges of helmets, strewing the route of the Imperialists with dead and lying men.

Wild hurrahs, shrieks, and outcries were tossed towards us on the gusty wind, or were borne away to the seaward; and now, to add tenfold grandeur to the terrible and magnificent scene, the Imperialists shot a succession of fireballs into the air, and each one, as it soared like a mountain of fire, shed a flood of brilliance upon the rippled lake, the smoky ravelin, and the columns of Spanish and Austrian musketeers who were pouring forward to the attack. The explosion of these fireballs, which sprung like rockets above the lake and sheeted it with light, until they fell, to splutter, hiss, and float upon its surface (for neither wind nor water could extinguish their flames), had a most fatal effect for the assailants themselves, by enabling us to direct our fire upon them with the deadliest precision.

"Unhorse me yonder fellow with the Red Plume!" said Sir Donald Mackay. "By my father's soul! 'tis his example alone that leads yon wavering column on! Down with him! level surely—Gillian M'Bane, thou art a deadly shot at a red-deer or a apercaillie. My silver brooch to thine, if thou makest yonder fellow kiss the turf."

"'Tis Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume!" cried a hundred voices.

My heart leaped at the cry; but, before I could speak, Gillian M'Bane had fired, and I could perceive the cavalier indicated by the colonel—and who was an officer magnificently armed and accoutred, brandishing his long sword, and conspicuous by a

scarlet plume—reel in his saddle; but the shot had only cut the lacing of his helmet, which rolled among his horse's feet; and still he pressed on, with his long grizzled hair, and longer cavalier-lock streaming on the wind.

"Spare that officer!" I exclaimed, striking up five or six levelled muskets with my sword. "I owe him my life, and more than my life; besides, he is my own near kinsman, though he serves the German Emperor."

I spoke but in time! Another moment had sent the poor count into eternity; for among our soldiers there were some of the most deadly marksmen, with bow or musket, that the Highlands could produce. For a whole hour we held the foe completely in check, and comparatively with little loss; for our parapet was breast high, and in many places defended or strengthened by the tambour work of palisades, which were ten feet long, and each six inches thick, driven into the glacis three deep, and closely loopholed. These had been considerably injured by the discharges of the camarade battery; still they afforded us some protection, while, on the other hand, the Imperial columns suffered dreadfully.

Their front ranks were enveloped in smoke, from whence broke forth incessant flashes of fire; but, after four desperate attempts to cross the ditch and ascend the lower glacis, they were compelled to retire beyond the lake. The Spaniards fled with precipitation; but the Germans retreated slowly, with all the coolness, steadiness, and constitutional phlegm of their nation, and continued to fire occasional shots so long as we were within range of them.

By this time day had broken; a faint grey light had begun to steal along the waters of the Sound, gilding the church spires of Stralsund, the summits of the Isle of Rügen, and whitening the pallid faces of the dead, who lay in hundreds by the shore of the Frankenlake, with distorted visages, eyeballs glazed, and jaws relaxed; for the aspect of those who die under the agony of gunshot-wounds is often horrible.

The bright midsummer sun came up in his morning glory above the Isle of Rügen, and the birds, as they sang their songs to the early day, twittered among the terrible *débris* of the past night's deadly work. The dew was on the verdant grass, and the bright flowers were raising their heavy cups and petals to that warm summer sun; but many a strong and many a brave man lay there, whose head would never rise again.

Many were lying there bleeding to death and crying aloud for help and for water; neither of which we could render, as the camarade battery and the fieldpieces had resumed their operations against the sconce; but many of the poor wretches crawled like red snails to the reedy margin of the shallow lake, and there

perished miserably among the mud and slime, in futile efforts to quench their burning thirst.

During the whole day a cannonade was poured from every part of the city upon the trenches of Wallenstein, and with eighty pieces of cannon he replied. The walls seemed to be garlanded with fire, while the smoke ascended into mid air, and overhung all Stralsund. Before us, from one flank of the Imperial lines to the other, including the whole lake, long wreaths of pale blue smoke were floating, and in their bosom we heard the boom of the cannon, as the parallels drew nearer and more near, with the occasional patter of the quicker musketry.

Wallenstein, the soul of battle, had now for the first time found, in Leslie of Balgonie, an antagonist who was more than his equal, and who taught him the folly and impiety of the oath he had sworn—to storm Stralsund, even though it were slung in chains between the heavens and earth.

So passed the day, and in the streets, on the walls, and by the ravelins, as well as in the trenches of the enemy, the loss of life was terrible; but towards evening the cannonade began to slacken, when the pieces became too hot for loading.

On the right flank of the Frankendör a low vapour seemed to approach us, and steel was seen to glitter amidst it at times. A few balls from a demi-cannon searched its dark womb, and then we saw a column of horse retire with precipitation.

So closed the day.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE KIRK-BELL OF GOMETRA—THE SORTIE.

THE siege continued for several months, with various successes and repulses—with advances on one hand, and sorties on the other. The slaughter was great in the city, but greater in the trenches, where the dead lay in thousands, buried in shallow holes, and where the wild dogs scraped away the earth by night, and the decaying masses tainted the humid summer air. From the walls we could easily distinguish where those hideous catacombs lay, and where the bodies, half decayed, were sweltering among the reeds and slime of the Frankenlake; for by day a dark cloud of flies swarmed over them, and by night the malaria that overhung the spot assumed an almost luminous tint. There, too, came the birds of prey; and there they remained hovering and gorging, until a musket-shot at daybreak put all to flight, save those whom the malaria, and their hideous repast, had rendered somewhat indisposed to fly.

Death had thinned the number of the citizens, whose aspect of

misery increased daily ; for the loss of friends, the loss of business, the destruction of their dwellings and property, the scarcity of money and of provisions, the prices of which were enormous, as all that our fourriers could collect were seized and retained for the use of the troops ; the aspect of each deserted holfe and bourse, where the merchants were wont to meet daily for the transaction of their lucrative and peaceful business—where vast sums once passed from pocket to pocket, and mighty deeds of transfer were executed—was also sorely changed. Torn down by the passing shot, columns, arcades, and balconies were strewn in fragments among the grass and moss that grew between the stones : here the trees, that whilome had shaded a pleasant boulevard, had been cut down to form an abattis ; there the pavement had been torn up to face a bastion, and vast gaps had been beaten in the solid walls.

The scarcity of food increased, until the soldiers, at last, were brought as low as the citizens, and we had little else to subsist on than a few handfuls of Hamburg meal per man. This we boiled into porridge and ate with a little butter, for we were destitute of milk ; every cow, sheep, and goat having been shot and eaten, even to the hides and entrails, long ago. Succour and provision from Rügen and the sea had now been cut off by various gun-boats and armed crayers sent by Wallenstein into the Sound, from whence a storm had blown the dismantled Danish fleet. Thus we had nothing before us but starvation or death ; and Sir Donald frequently urged that we should all sally forth, sword in hand, and cut a passage to some seaport on the Saxon shore. But the stout Laird of Balgonie vowed that he would never thus desert a city entrusted to his care by the princes of the north ; and that to leave the Stralsunders to their fate would be alike unworthy of ourselves and of the ancient military fame of the Scottish people.

This argument was conclusive, and we all resolved to make our graves on the shore of Pomerania, if Gustavus Adolphus could not march to our assistance. Of that we saw not the least probability, for at that time he had his hands full of work in Poland, where, with thirty thousand men (ten thousand of whom were Scottish infantry), he was besieging Dantzic, storming Newbürg, Strazbürg, Dribentz, Sweitz, and Massovia. As for the unfortunate King of Denmark, who was then hovering near Count Tilly, off the Holstein shore, we never expected the least relief from him. Pay we had none, and very little provisions ; but we had plenty of powder and shot of every description. The garrison was now reduced to four thousand Scots, and one thousand Germans, Danes, and Frenchmen, all worn by incessant toil and scarcity of food, for they had a strong city to defend against a hundred thousand men, in whose rear lay all the vast resources

of Germany and Flanders; for Wallenstein could command everything between the Baltic and the gates of Vienna.

Pressing on their works, his pioneers laid down their sap rollers, and dug trenches in new places, facing them internally with gabions and fascines, over which they flung the loose earth, and thus got rapidly under cover. Some of these pioneers were so bold in one place as to push their sap rollers to the foot of the outer glacis.

My daily visits to Ernestine threw a bright gleam of happiness athwart the murky cloud of war and desolation that surrounded us; and when seated by her side, in her pretty little boudoir, I forgot the miseries endured by us at the Frankendör, the desolation of the city, the desperate state—the starvation and death—to which we were hurrying, and which I strove to conceal from her for a time, but in vain.

Once, when I led her to the Frankendör during a brief cessation of hostilities, that she might see the white tents of her father's brigade, the wan visage, the anxious eyes, the tattered attire and fallen paunch of more than one once rotund and jovial city councillor, attracted her attention, and displayed, in language too powerful to be misunderstood, the undeserved miseries endured by the honest and industrious people of Stralsund.

Scottish porridge is certainly very good in its way; but as the best of food will pall the appetite by repetition, we soon tired of having nothing but porridge for breakfast, porridge for dinner, and porridge for supper. The tables of the Field-marshal commanding, of the burgomaster, and all the great men of the city were limited to the same poor fare; and in some instances the aged, the sickly, and the mendicant, who were unable to raise the enormous sum for which an ounce of meal or of salted fish were sold in the market-place, were found dead in their litters of straw, or at the threshold of their doors, and reduced to mere skeletons.

War hardens the human heart, and love makes it selfish. I cared little for what happened to the poor citizens, provided Ernestine knew nothing of what they endured; but though Ian, Phadrig Mhor, and myself parted with everything we could spare—selling even our buckles, silver buttons, &c., to a Jew in the Platz, to procure the necessaries of life for her—even these began to fail, and in common with the rest I became desperate.

About this time Sir Alexander Leslie obtained intelligence—how, I know not—that a train of wagons, laden with provisions for the Imperialists, were coming towards Stralsund from Greifswalde, a fortified town of Prussian Pomerania, situated about fifteen miles distant, at the confluence of the Reik with the Baltic. Of those wagons he determined to possess himself, and on that night (the 1st of September) ordered Sir Donald

Mackay with our regiment of Strathnaver, the Lord Spynie with his Lowland musketeers, and Sir Ludovick Leslie with his old Scots regiment, to march at dusk, and (while he in person was diverting the enemy's attention by scouring their trenches) endeavour to fall upon the post of the quartermaster-general, to seize some of the laden wagons, and at all hazards bring them into Stralsund.

Of this intended outfall I did not inform Ernestine, for if I returned safe, all would be well, and she would thus escape a few hours of unnecessary alarm and grief; if I was slain, poor girl! she would hear of it soon enough, for evil tidings always fly faster than good.

We paraded in the market-place without our colours, and silently the priming and loading was proceeded with. Fortunately the night was gloomy, though the wind was still, and a dense vapour that came heavily up from the sea spread over the land and effectually concealed us, as in three dense columns we issued from a gate of the town, and marching between the Greifswalde road and the margin of the Sound, on the left flank of the city, softly approached the unconscious enemy. In this sortie there occurred an incident which I cannot help relating, even at the risk of being considered superstitious.

"Ochone!" said Phadrig Mhor, as he shouldered his Lochaber axe, "there is many a pretty man marching out just now that will never come in again."

"Most probably, Phadrig," said I; "but why croak in this solemn tone?"

"I could name two," said he, sinking his voice into a low and impressive whisper.

"Two—?"

"Ay, two, who will never march more—God bless and save them both!"

"In the devil's name, what do you mean, Sergeant Mhor?"

"That to-night the kirk-bell of Gometra will toll."

"Well—and who will toll it?"

"How can I say, Captain Rollo—the fiend, perhaps; but this I know, that it is no mortal hand that stirs its iron tongue. It tolls *whenever a M'Alpine dies*, and this night Red Angus will fall."

"Hush, Phadrig!" said I, impressed by his Highland solemnity of manner; "at such a time as this do not think of such things."

"I cannot help it. Last night I lay on guard at the Frankendör. My head was rolled in my plaid, and the cold earth was my bed, but I slept as sound as if my resting-place had been on the soft heather of Cairneilar, or my dear mother's hut in Strathdee, and had a dream between the passing night and the grey morning.

Aw M'Alpine and M'Coll, even as you may see them now,

each marching at the head of his company, like a stately High-land gentleman; but high upon the breast of each there was—a shroud—to mark that death was near. The hands of Mary and her Son be over them, for they are both gallant men! Red Angus is strong as Cuchullin, and M'Coll is unerring as Conloch; but if they escape the black work of to-night I will never trust more in dreams, though my father was a Taischatr, and the Taisch runs in the blood."

"Hush—hush!" said Sir Donald; "silence in the ranks."

"The soldiers of the quartermaster-general are Spaniards," said M'Alpine, in a whisper; "who commands them?"

"Hector M'Lean, a gentleman of Mull."

"M'Lean of Lochdon?" asked Angus, becoming pale.

"The same," replied the colonel; "a desperate and determined fellow."

Angus sighed through his clenched teeth; his hazel eyes filled with fire, and with a darkened brow he strode on at the head of his company.

"'Tis M'Lean, who robbed him of his wife," said the sergeant, giving my plaid a twitch. "If they meet, there will be bloody work; and, as I have said, before morning the bell of Gometra will toll."

The night was dark, and a vapour from the sea rolled over the level land, concealing our movements. We passed the right flank of the enemy, by keeping so far out upon the shore that we marched mid-leg deep in the sea, where we were completely shrouded by the mist and gloom. All was still even in the Imperial camp, which lay partly on our right and partly in our rear; lights twinkled at times among the tents and trenches, and the faint sound of voices in argument or merriment, or the scrap of some hoarse German drinking ditty, stole upon the night; but, unheard and unseen, we reached the Greifswalde road, and, according to the orders of Marshal Leslie, drew up in close columns, under shelter of a thick wood which grew on each side of the pathway. There we were to remain *en perdu* for three hours, after which we were to return to the city by the seashore; but, if we were discovered, or if the foe extended his flank towards the water, we ran the eminent risk of being cut off to a man. Even if we were successful—that is, if we captured the whole train of wagons, and succeeded in conveying them towards Stralsund, by breaking through the Austrians from their rear, it appeared to me that we should be swallowed up like Pharaoh's host, if not by waves of the sea, at least by the masses of men who were certain to close in upon us; but I knew not that, at the sound of the first shot, old Leslie was to sally forth, at the head of his own regiment of Fife and Angus men, to scour the trenches of the enemy's left, and cause a complete diversion and confusion.

squadron of cuirassiers and some companies of Walloon infantry, threw forward his left flank to give us a cross fire.

Sir Donald, with our pikes, five hundred strong, led the van, which marched above their garters in the sea till every kilt was floating. The Spaniards fired a volley, by which at least one hundred men were shot, or drowned, by being severely wounded; but, ere they could reload, we were among them, and at their very throats; and now ensued one of the deadliest conflicts ever witnessed by the walls of Stralsund, since Jaromar built them by the Baltic Sea.

The three regiments formed at once in brigade order by double companies, pikes in the centre and musketeers on the flanks; Sir Donald was in front, with his silver target braced upon his left arm, and his long claymore in his right hand.

"Santiago!" shouted the Spaniards of Camargo's regiment; "Santiago y cierra España!"

"Keep together like a wall!" exclaimed their colonel. "God and St. James of Compostella will open a path for us through this herd of Scottish curs."

Then came the hoarse hurrah of the German cuirassiers, and the wilder cheer of the Walloon infantry.

"Forward, gentlemen and comrades!" exclaimed Mackay, with a voice that swept over the water like a trumpet; "forward at push of pike, and hew me a passage through these Spaniards!"

"St. Andrew, St. Andrew!" cried Lord Spynie, who was on foot by his side, and the whole brigade repeated the old Scottish war-cry, as we swept forward splashing through the silvery water like a mighty phalanx towards the Spaniards, upon whom we burst with incredible fury, as I have said, before they had time to reload. Highland clansmen and Lowland musketeers went on like a wall of steel. It was a renewal of the wars of old; for again the dark-browed Celt and the fair-haired Goth were fighting against the descendants of the old Iberians.

Being formed in eight ranks deep, after the old fashion of Tilly, they withstood our charge with a solid front, and a ferocious conflict began; the pikemen charging with their shortened pikes, others plying their clubbed muskets like flails, and the officers using their claymores with both hands, or withdrawing their left only to handle their dirks, or fire their long Scottish pistols right into the eyes of the Spaniards.

So great was the confusion of this conflict, maintained mid-leg in the water, that for a time I stood like a statue, with my sword raised above my head, incapable of deciding on which side the blow should descend.

The crash of musket-butts falling in full swing upon pike afts and steel caps; the sharp rasp of sword-blades against

each other, or upon tempered corslets, from which, by every thrust or blow, they struck the sparks in showers; the discharge of firelocks and pistols; the cries, groans, and oaths; the swaying to and fro, and the desperate struggles of those who, on their weapons being broken, grasped each other by the throat or heard, with hands ungloved, and strove on this side or on that to drag their adversary down beneath the blood-stained water, then reduced to a mass of dingy and gory mud;—and all this combined, when seen under the cold, ghastly glare of a northern moon, with the sea around us, the floating vapour on one hand, and on the other the confused background of Stralsund, and those trenches where old Leslie was waging a conflict as deadly, made up one of the most infernal medleys of horror that was ever beheld by the eye of a soldier.

Conspicuous in this *mêlée*, I perceived the high eagle's wings of Ian, as he dealt his cuts and thrusts, now under and now over the round shield which covered his breast; and by his side was gigantic Phadrig, swaying his ponderous poleaxe with all the coolness and deliberation of a mower.

Amidst this brief but terrible conflict, by the irresistible decree of fate, or the strong instinct of deadly hatred, Red Angus M'Alpine encountered and recognised Colonel Hector M'Lean, and each greeted the other with an exclamation of ferocious joy.

"Hector of Lochdon!" said Angus, in a hoarse voice.

"Angus Roy!" cried the Imperialist, and they pressed upon each other with a fury too great to last. The former was fired by the memory of his son's death: the latter by the loss of his wife, and the undeserved sorrow, shame, and ruin brought upon his hearth and home.

They were no longer men; they fought like wild animals; for all the long-treasured fury of a Highlander, who has wrongs to avenge and insults to wipe out by the sword, swelled up in their hearts, and Red Angus was no more the same man—the same merry comrade we had known and served with so long. Disdaining to parry the thrusts of M'Lean, he raised his heavy sword above his head with both hands, and clove him down through steel and bone to the edge of the gorget; at the same moment he received a shot in the breast, and with a wild cry threw his arms aloft, and fell lifeless into the sandy water.

Enraged by his fall, the regiment swept on, and who could resist them?—those children of the mist and the battle—those true sons of the sword, as Ossian called their sires in the times of old. Nor Goth, nor Spaniard—Imperial horseman, nor Walloon musketeer—for they were shred away like the red leaves when the autumn wind pours down the mountain-side; and there, as at Lütter and Leipzig, the glorious valour of my Scottish comrades bore all before it.

So great was the confusion, that I do not think I struck one blow that night.

The brigade broke through like a mighty wedge, and, with the loss of three hundred men killed and wounded, reached Stralsund with all the wagons save one, after giving the foe such an *alerte* as Wallenstein had never experienced before, while his trenches on the other flank received such a scouring, that his trench-guards kept surer watch ever after. In fact, so severely were they handled by Sir Donald Mackay in one place, and old Marshal Leslie in the other, that the night of the outfall or sortie from Stralsund, was never forgotten by the army of the Empire; but was always remembered with mingled rage and dissatisfaction.

Among many bodies that were floated by the sea near our out-works, we found, some days after, the remains of poor Angus M'Alpine; which, though mutilated by the fish, and distorted by death, we could easily recognise, by his dress, his harness, and the crape scarf, which as usual was bound to his left arm. We buried him with all the honours of war, placing in the same grave Sergeant M'Gillvray of Drumnaglas, who died of a wound received by a musket-shot on the night of the sortie.

I have since been told, though I cannot vouch for the truth of it, that at the very time poor Angus fell (between the night and morning) the bell of his village kirk emitted a deep and hollow sound.

Captain M'Coll was not killed, being found alive by some German harridans who were stripping the dead; he was saved from their knives by the famous Colonel Gordon of Tzerchki's regiment, by whom he was made prisoner and sent to Wallenstein. The latter committed him to the castle of Dillingen, on the Danube (where the Scottish Colonel Ramsay was starved to death), and there he remained in captivity for eight long years. Being released by Count Leslie, he returned home to find that his good lady, after waiting seven years and a day, had become weary or despaired in his absence; and after having him summoned by name, with all possible legal formality, by sound of a horn, at the nearest market-cross, and thrice over at the pier-end of Lieth, had taken unto herself another spouse, who met poor M'Coll at the door of his own dwelling, and threatened to hang him as an impostor upon his own dule-tree.

Disgusted by such a reception, and shrinking from the shame of having to sue for his own wife before the Lords of Session, he returned again to Germany, and fell, as major of Sir John Hepburn's regiment, at the great battle of Nordlingen.

Book the Thirteenth.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

THE WHITE FLAG.

THE provisions, procured at so much danger and with such loss, were a seasonable, but scanty relief; for nineteen wagon-loads of flour and butter went but a short way among the starving population of Stralsund; and I remember that the strong taste of the Greifswalde garlic made most of our men ill. The fields around that notable Hans Town abound with this plant, which usually flowers about Whitsuntide; thus all the flesh of their cattle, with the milk and butter, taste of it—at least we thought so.

Provoked by the alarm and loss he had suffered, and by the temporary supply of a day's food procured for Stralsund, Wallenstein ordered the trenches to be pushed on with greater vigour, and urged the blockade by sea, taking advantage of the absence of King Christian, who was then lingering about Wolgast (the capital of a duke of the house of Pomerania), in the hope of being joined by Bernard of Saxe-Weimar and Major-General Slammersdorf, who were endeavouring to rouse the timid boors of the Danish isles; but it always happened, unfortunately, that when the eloquence, ardour, or gold of the gallant duke mustered a few recruits, the terrible aspect of the old grumbler Slammersdorf, minus a leg, an arm, an eye, and all over cuts and patches, invariably scattered them to their farms and fastnesses in the woods.

The cannonading continued daily without cessation; but so admirable were the means of defence, and so excellent were the precautions taken by Marshal Leslie, that the loss of life in Stralsund was trifling when compared to the slaughter made by our cannon and musketry among the Imperial pioneers and trench-guards; but still starvation stared us gauntly in the face; and some of the poorer class of citizens, after devouring dogs and cats, and every animal, even to their household storks, perished of sheer destitution.

We received not a farthing of pay at that time; and I remember that Major Fritz, by establishing a *liaison* with a generous old countess, contrived to keep himself and the officers of his regiment, as he said, "in very good feather." I remember, also, the Baron Karl saying, in jest—

"Der Teufel! Captain Rollo, if this starvation is pressed much further, we shall all be reduced to eat horses, like our Scandinavian ancestors!"

This actually became the case. Twenty of Karl's pistoliers were

dismounted by order of Sir Alexander, and their horses were shot, flayed, and exposed for sale in the market-place, where a wild assemblage of hungry women and hollow-eyed children beheld this hideous food displayed at an exorbitant price by the burgo-master; and where strong men contended with them for the hoofs, the entrails, and offal.

By the kindness of Doctor Pennicuk, the head of our medical staff, I was enabled to procure many little things for Ernestine, without which I do not believe she could have survived on the coarse, scanty, and uncertain supplies of food received by the troops. Yet to convey her out of Stralsund was impossible; for the cannon and musketry of the enemy prevented all egress; and twice cartels with flags of truce had been fired on, though sent out with the intention of craving that the wives and children of the citizens, and various Imperial prisoners then in our possession, might be permitted to leave the gates.

Around Ernestine and myself, death and disaster had narrowed our circle of dear friends; but our tenderness for each other increased; and, when off duty, my time was constantly spent in bestowing consolation and attentions on my beautiful charge. One day, about this time, I was sitting with the Baron Karl and Major Fritz at the window of a house which overlooked the bastions of the Frankendör, which my regiment still occupied, and from whence we could see the Imperialists in their trenches beyond the lake. Karl and I were lunching on a piece of young horse, which had been delicately broiled by his servant; and as the baron was quartermaster-general, he had contrived that we should have the additional luxuries of pepper and salt, with a hard biscuit each, and a can of muddy wine to wash down the steaks of the poor bay trooper.

"Another slice, baron, if you please," said I, after my second had vanished.

"Ah—you like it, then! I question much if Fritz, or his old widow, have often a repast so tender; for this was the youngest horse in my troop—quite a foal, poor brute! However, I beg that we may call it excellent venison, only that it has not been kept long enough by our cook."

"Call it what you please, Karl," said Fritz; "but I will not permit my countess to be laughed at. She is a generous old dame, and quite adores me! She lavishes on me the contents of her larder and wine-cellar; I lavish my tenderness on her in return. 'Tis the best way of subsisting, when the military chest and the market-place are alike empty."

"But is not this dish excellent?"

"Admirable! Your cook will make his fortune; and to dine with you will become quite a proverb. Instead of 'Lucullus' as with Lucullus,' people shall say, 'We are to dine with

Karl—in his repasts he is a perfect Sybarite. *Mensa prima*—horseflesh, with salt; *Mensa secunda*—ditto, with pepper.”

“But what are the Imperialists about?” said I; “something unusual is stirring by the side of the lake.”

“Some Imperialists are launching a boat, and there are several men crowding into her.”

“One tall fellow wears a red feather,” said I.

“’Tis Rupert of Carlstein himself! For what can the old blockhead wish to sail on the lake, right under our batteries?”

“’Tis a fast-day,” said Karl, “and perhaps he is going to fish, supposing that our twenty-four pounders may have roused a few eels from the mud of the lake.”

“Come, come, Herr Baron!” said I, “the count is my particular friend, and I have to beg——”

“Pardon me, I forgot! One, of course, does not like to hear that man called a blockhead who may say to one some morning, ‘My dear fellow, I have the most sincere respect for you—I love you as if you were my own son, the child of my dear defunct So-and-so. I will give with my daughter the chateau of Giezar, and my fief of Königsgratz, with 100,000 doubloons in hard and heavy cash.’ Der Teufel! I would not like to hear him spoken of otherwise than in the highest strain of commendation. But come—another slice of the venison!”

“See!—they have unfurled a white flag of truce.”

“Then I hope your Scots at the Frankendör will receive it as Arnheim received those with which I twice approached Wallenstein—that is, with a smart volley of musketry.”

We snatched up our swords, and hurried down to the Frankendör, which we reached just as the boat grounded, and three men, one of whom bore a white standard displayed from a halberd, approached the gate that faced the lake.

One was a gaudily-attired drummer, who beat a long roll, during which the trio stood until a Highland drummer beat a reply; then they approached, and we could perceive that one of our visitors was a herald (clad in the magnificent tabard of the Imperial college), and in the other, by his rich dress and stately figure, I recognised at once the count, the father of Ernestine, and my father’s brother, though he was then ignorant of our relationship. I burned with impatience to address him; but neither the place nor the time suited. Ian despatched Phadrig Mhor for orders to the quarters of the marshal commanding, who desired that neither the herald nor his companions were to be admitted, even blindfold, lest they might merely be a party come to spy our defences and destitute condition; and that he would question them in person.

After a few minutes’ delay, the venerable Leslie approached the klinket of the Frankendör; it was opened, and he stepped

out, alone and unattended, to receive the envoys of the Duke of Friedland. As he passed out, I said to him hurriedly—

"Marshal, I pray you to excuse me; one of the Imperialists at the gate is the great Count of Carlstein—his daughter is starving among us here in Stralsund—ask him now if, for Heaven's sake and her own, he will take her with him to the German camp."

I said this in a voice made tremulous by emotion; but I foresaw that Ernestine would have to suffer yet greater misery, if she remained among us, and I had secretly resolved that the mere selfish gratification of enjoying her society should not be made paramount to her health and happiness.

"I shall mention your wishes to the count," said Leslie; and his words sounded like a parting knell to me, for I was assured that we should be separated at last.

"I have done but my duty," thought I; "it were no kindness to keep her here in Stralsund."

Our marshal—whose little and somewhat decrepit figure, clad in a plain buff coat laced with silver, and who wore a white scarf of silk over his right shoulder, sustaining a basket-hilted Scottish sword, appeared to great disadvantage beside the towering figure of the count—advanced three paces from the gate, and, raising his blue bonnet, announced himself with brief formality to the visitors, adding, "You have been received somewhat differently from those cartels I lately sent towards your trenches."

"We obey but the orders of Wallenstein," replied the count, with grave brevity.

"Well, herald—what do you require of us?—I am ready to listen and reply."

In modern times, this was one of the last instances of a city being summoned by a herald; but the revival of the obsolete custom suited the vain, splendid, and chivalric ideas of Wallenstein. This herald, who wore a tabard that blazed with embroidery (for it was charged with the bars argent and gules of Hungary; the red lion of Bohemia; the fesse of Austria; the triple tower of Castile, and all the countless quarterings of the great German empire), after coughing once or twice, took off his conical hat, and, unrolling a paper, began thus, in hoarse and guttural German:—

"By orders of Albrecht, Count of Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland and Mecklenburg, General of the Empire and Oceanic seas, and in the name of the most high and mighty prince, Ferdinand——"

"Oho!—so your duke puts his name before the Emperor's!" said Sir Alexander Leslie; "come, Master Herald, that is not bad!"

Carlstein bit his lips and smiled.

"By the grace of God, Emperor of the Romans," continued the herald, reading very fast; "King of Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Servia, and Rescia; Archduke of Austria; Duke of Burgundy, Brabant, Stiria, Carinthia, Carniola, Luxembourg, Wittenburg, and Lord of Silesia——"

"Gude guide us!" muttered the Scottish marshal.

"Marquis of the Holy Roman Empire, Burgau, and Moravia; Count of Hapsburg, the Tyrol, Ferrette, and Kiburg; Landgrave of Alsace; Lord of Portnau and Salines; I, Rudolf of Mentz, Black Eagle king-of-arms, summon the burgomaster and citizens of Stralsund, with the general——"

"The burgomaster has no authority here," said Sir Alexander Leslie; "I alone command in Stralsund."

"With the general and Scottish troops of the King of Sweden, to surrender and open the gates of the said city, on the third day from this, by twelve o'clock at noon, under pain of a general assault, after which every man, woman, and child, soldier and civilian, without respect to age or rank, will be put, indiscriminately and without mercy, to the sword."

"I am but an unlettered soldier of fortune," replied Leslie, with a calm smile on his round and good-humoured face; "and being but an humble man, am altogether unable to send a fitting answer to the proprietor of this terrible muster-roll of hard names and barbarous titles. Do the Emperor and Duke think to frighten us with this ware? I am but the Laird, or the Graf of Balgonie (if it better suits your German lugs); yet by the orders I have received from Christian and Gustavus, the allied princes of the North, who committed this once happy and industrious city to my care, there were no provisions made anent treating with, or surrendering its people to the tender mercies of, the Imperial troops; therefore I am extremely sorry that I have only gunpowder and shot at the service of the Duke of Friedland. You may return and tell him so; with this additional message, that did I act as *he* would have done, I would send you all back in salted joints, like a barrel of Fourrier's beef."

"Stout Balgonie, you say well!" said Carlstein, in our own language; "by my honour, Wallenstein will find that Stralsund might as well have been slung in chains, as committed to the care of you and the brave Scots of Gustavus of Sweden."

"Count of Carlstein, you are, like myself, a cavalier of fortune, and know that we have seldom other inheritance than our fathers' swords, and know assuredly that our honour is the very breath of our nostrils. While one Scottish musketeer can stand by my side, and while one stone of Stralsund remains upon another, I will never surrender, and Wallenstein can only have the city when the last soldier and the last stone have fallen together."

You have your answer, gentlemen. Herald, you may go; but, Count of Carlstein, I beg one word with you."

At these words I felt my heart beat thick and fast. For me, I thought the sun would soon set in Stralsund.

"We have among us here your eldest daughter, who is, of course, most anxious to rejoin you, though we have treated her with every kindness and care, even as if she had been my ain bairn; but we cannot foresee what new dangers a day may bring forth, and a beleaguered city is assuredly no place for women, as we know well——"

"God bless and thank you, Sir Alexander Leslie!" said the count, with a thick voice, as a change overspread his face; "if my daughters are in your charge, they could not be in better hands, and 'tis well, for receive them I cannot! Wallenstein has sworn, that until the city is surrendered, no man, woman, or child, shall leave its gates, alive or dead."

"Ye honour me, count," replied the marshal, whose native accent always waxed stronger when he became friendly or familiar; "but, believe me, there are some buirdly Scottish chields here with me in Stralsund, who will deem it their greatest happiness to hae an opportunity o' shedding their best bluid in their defence."

"Bear my dearest blessing to my poor girls, and let us hope that happier times are in store for us all—adieu!" and, unwilling that his emotion should be visible before so many eyes, the count turned abruptly away, and, stepping into the boat, was rowed, with the herald, slowly back towards the Imperial lines.

"Girls?" I repeated, as Sir Alexander re-entered by the klinket; "then he knows not that one of his daughters is no more."

"I saw how the puir man's heart filled, and how his eyes dimmed at the thought of his bairns," replied the kind old marshal; "and I could not be a hard-hearted auld tyke, and bluntly tell how one had perished. Oh, no—ill news travels fast enough, gude kens!"

Such is the selfishness of love, that, notwithstanding the continued danger, privation, and discomfort, to which Ernestine was certain of being subjected, I now felt a glow of satisfaction in being assured that I could not yet be deprived of her society.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

RETRIBUTION.

SOME days after this, I was hastening from the Frankendör towards the residence of Ernestine, when, at a corner of the bourse, where the merchants were wont to meet, but where the

rank grass grew between the untrodden stones, I observed a provision-shop, or victualler's, the last in the street which as yet maintained the aspect of having anything like business, which all its less fortunate neighbours had long since hopelessly abandoned.

Upon the front wall of the house, there were cut and gilded the date 1600, with one of those verses, then so common in Stralsund, recording in barbarous Latin that Jaromar, prince of Rügen, had fortified the city, after it had been burned by the Danes and Pomeranians. Half concealing this, a gaudy signboard was nailed over it, bearing the name and occupation of the retailer, the aspect of whose stock made me remember (what I seldom forgot) the larder of Ernestine's establishment; and, being without money, I twisted a few golden links from the chain her father had given me in more prosperous times, and, desiring a soldier to follow me, entered the shop, the entire goods of which consisted of three somewhat shrivelled hams, a side of suspicious-like bacon, and a few strings of freshly-made but still more suspicious sausages, the material of which, at such a time, when the marshal and burgomaster had been living for months on horseflesh, or little better, made me resolve to have nothing to do with them. But then everything was scrupulously neat and clean, the Memel floor and counters were scrubbed to the whiteness of snow, the tin and brass work shone like silver and gold. An elderly man, with wiry grey moustaches, and wearing a nightcap and long apron, was busy with a chopping-knife preparing more sausages, which he seasoned profusely with garlic, salt, and pepper.

He appeared considerably disconcerted on my entrance, and, despite the deference usually paid by his class and all cits to a long moustache and long sword, he doggedly continued his occupation; but his wife, a smart little woman, with lively black eyes, and a face that was wofully ravaged by the small-pox, tripped forward to ask me what I would have.

The question had scarcely left her lips, when she grew paler than her white coif, trembled, and cast down her eyes. Her voice and her *tout-ensemble* were familiar to me. I felt myself change colour in turn, and mingled emotions of pleasure, anger, and surprise ran through me.

"What a change is here!" said I. "Is it possible that I find the Señora Prudentia—the sylph-like dancer, whose actions were so full of grace and beauty—the songstress, who warbled like a fairy bird in summer—transformed into a little vender of sausages and ham!"

Perhaps there was something spiteful in this remark; but I had a lively recollection of the doubloons and the ring, bought from an honest jeweller of the Hebrew race in the Burgerplatz at Glückstadt.

"Herr Captain," she replied, modestly and timidly, and w

an air that well became her *then*, with her plain white linen coif, her large neckerchief, and short bunchy petticoats of scarlet cloth (for every way she had fairly become the little burgher's wife), "adversity has taught me a good lesson. I was vain; I was beautiful and wicked; and God has punished me. He sent a severe illness which robbed me of my beauty, and my vanity went with it. I should always have remembered that beauty fades like the summer, but, unlike the summer, returns no more. I shall never be beautiful again, never! (This was said with some bitterness.) I shall never sing more; for the same envious illness robbed me of my fine voice. But it matters not—I am at least content; yet *ay de mi, Espana!* I shall never see Spain more! My husband——"

"What!—you are then married at last?"

"My husband is an honest man, and I am become an industrious little housewife. We should make quite a fortune but for this unhappy siege; and shall we not yet, Herr Spürrledter!—look up, and speak for yourself."

"Spürrledter!—how—is your spouse my old acquaintance, the corporal of Imperial horse?" said I, with new astonishment, as that personage, on being thus compelled to show his face, doffed his white nightcap, and stood soldierly erect before me.

"I am sorry to see you here, corporal," said I; "for if Stralsund is taken, the Imperialists will hang you, as surely as the sun is shining."

Had I been less of a soldier, I am certain that the-recollection of the desperate love I had once made to Prudentia would have embarrassed me; but there was something as comical in the transformation of the wiry and ferocious old corporal of Reiters into a maker of sausages, as there was something melancholy in the change of the beautiful dancer into a plain-looking citizen's wife, with an enormous white coif, red skirt, and bunch of keys.

"And now, Herr Captain," said she, with a business-like air, to cut short an unpleasant pause, "in what can we serve you?"

"By placing your best ham in the hands of this soldier," said I, hesitatingly.

She gave me a glance of mingled archness and sadness, and lifted down the ham; while I, who once would not have allowed her to pluck a flower unaided, stood stoically by.

"We have been so shamefully plundered, Mein Herr!" said old Spürrledter; "'tis only a day since Major Fritz, that tall cavalier with the short beard, and two yellow feathers in his hat, marched off with all our best and last Bologna sausages."

"And to-day," added Prudentia, with something of her old "another insolent biped without feathers carried away our owl."

"Heaven's sake, do not be alarmed, Frau Spürrledter!" I

replied, hastily; "I am not foraging, as your corporal has, no doubt, done many a day. I require the provant, and must have it; but, having no money, beg to leave these six links of pure gold, which are more than enough to pay for thrice my purchase. And now," I added, as the soldier marched off with it, "I trust, Fraü, you have not, as at Glückstadt, any acquaintances beyond the walls, for I am not now the fool I was in those days."

"Fool! Oh, how can you use a term so harsh! And I am not the pretty knave I was in those days, either—oh, no!" she added, sadly and archly. "I beseech you not to think so, and not to discover to the marshal all I have done in other times; nor to say I am the sister of—of him you know. Ah! your eyes sparkle, and I believe with reason. If you can extend protection to my husband and myself, it will be a favour—yes, it will be a mercy, which we shall do our best to merit; for in a city surrounded by ferocious besiegers, and defended by desperate and starving soldiers of fortune, the situation of the poor citizens is not very enviable."

I felt somewhat moved by the severe and complete retribution that had fallen on this once proud and artful coquette, and I promised to yield all the protection in my power. She declined to receive the golden links; but I insisted upon her doing so, and remembering, with something of awkwardness, the different relation in which we now stood to each other, and all the flowery love-speeches and magniloquent nonsense I had said to her in other times, I was in some haste to be gone, and bade her adieu.

As I issued into the Bourse, accompanied by the Highlander who bore my unsentimental purchase, which the hollow-cheeked passers beheld with eager and wolfish eyes, old Spürrledter hurried after me, and raising a hand to his white nightcap, in the old style of his military salute,—

"Herr Captain," said he, "I believe you know what a devil of a brother-in-law I have. Well, though an old soldier who has smelt powder at Prague and Fleura, I have a mortal terror of such a relation; and, despite all your guards and gates, he has been twice (the Lord alone knows how!) in Stralsund here, and has robbed us each time of every thaler we possessed."

"What—within Stralsund?"

"Ay, here—in Stralsund."

"This rascal must be cunning as a lynx."

"Cunning as Lucifer, Herr Captain, and more wicked withal. I have the honour to point out to you, that this reputable relation of mine is hovering like a jackal about the Imperial camp; and, as I believe you have some dark scores to settle with him, he might be lured within reach of a party, and consigned to the care of the provost-marshal."

At these words, a glow of vengeance swelled up in my breast.

I thanked the ex-corporal of Reitres, and promised to call again; but other events frustrated his kind intention of sending his troublesome brother-in-law in search of another world. With a light heart I hastened to the residence of Ernestine, yet remembering with something of shame—a shame that made my love for her the more pure and noble—my transient folly at Glückstadt.

After that day I never again saw Prudentia; for though I was three months longer in Stralsund, I avoided the shop at the corner of the Bourse; for I had no wish that Ian, or any of our officers or friends, especially Major Fritz, should discover in the plump little victualler the Prudentia of my early days of soldiering—my “mysterious countess,” as Karl called her in jest: moreover, the progress and incidents of that disastrous siege soon gave me other and graver things to think of.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

THE JESUIT.

NONE, save those who have been circumstanced as we unfortunately were, in a city besieged and reduced almost to the last extremity, can fully appreciate the value of the prize I brought with me to lay at the feet of Ernestine; but a pound of meat, or a slice of plain bread, were then worth thrice their weight in gold.

When I entered her little boudoir, which the Fraü of the last occupant had furnished with exquisite taste, and hung with curtains of the richest velvet, she was kneeling at prayer, and the softness of the Turkey carpet enabled me to approach her unheard. Then I paused for a time; but her eye detected me, and she arose with a charming smile.

“You were praying when I left you, and still you are praying! Dear Ernestine, how very bad you must be to have so much to repent of!” said I, playfully.

“All my prayers are for my poor father and you, Philip—for your safety and for his,” replied she, with somewhat of a pouting air: “believe me, that since I came to Stralsund I have almost forgotten how to pray for myself.”

“Now, do not pout, dear Ernestine,” said I, clasping her head upon my breast; “for it does not look pretty even in you, who possess the charm of that perfect innocence, without which a beautiful woman is like a rose without perfume.”

“Now, where did you pick up this piece of poetry?”

“Not amidst the shot and smoke, the slime and slaughter, of yonder batteries; but here, with you, Ernestine; for it is you, and alone, who shed a ray of light and poetry along the dark and
ous way I am treading.”

"And in the hope that Heaven will protect you on that way, to the end of your journey—let me say *our* journey, Philip—I pray so often."

"Heaven," said I, caressing her, "will never be so cruel as to separate two hearts that love each other as ours do."

"Oh, Philip! I have heard Father Ignatius say, that excess of earthly love excludes the love of Heaven, which thereby becomes incensed, and sends death as a terrible mentor to those who forget it."

I was about to make some jesting protest against this theory of our old friend, when a knock was given at the door, and the red visage and redder beard of Gillian M'Bane, one of our musketeers, appeared; and, after many apologies, he informed me that a patrol of the guard at the Frankendör had taken a prisoner, who incessantly asked for me, and that Ian Dhu required my presence immediately.

Reluctantly I left Ernestine, and taking my sword with me (for I remembered the vicinity of Bandolo), piloted my way in the evening twilight to the Frankendör. From the description of "the prisoner" given to me by Gillian, viz.—a tall, lantern-jawed man, with high cheek-bones, black hair and bald head, keen eyes and sallow visage, with a long ungainly figure enveloped in a black cassock buttoned up to his chin,—I had little doubt that he would prove no other than Father Ignatius; and, by part of a conversation which I overheard while descending the steep stair towards the bastion gate, I learned that my suspicions were right.

"You afford no sufficient explanation for prowling close to the walls," I heard the Baron Karl say, as he and Ian stood forward from among a group of our Highlanders, one of whom held up a lantern to the prisoner's face; "but say at once for what purpose you came here?"

"To preach the religion of God, even as Colomanus the Scot, who converted the pagans of Austria, and Argobastus the Scot, who baptized those of Strasburg, preached when they came here before me in other times."

"Bravo!" thought I; "it is Father Ignatius."

"Your religion," said Karl, laughing; "and what are you?"

"A poor and unworthy brother of the Order of Jesus," he replied, bowing his head at the name.

"Oho!—a Jesuit!" continued Karl, in his impudent way; "so that is the trade you follow?"

"Mein Herr, I follow the commands of God—the Master of all. Sir," said he, suddenly turning to Ian, "I am a Scotsman, a countryman of your own, and indeed, sir, merit not this rough handling."

"A Scotsman!" reiterated Ian; "why the deuce did you not

say so before? Enter then, and, Imperialist though ye be, here is the hand, and there the sword, that will stretch on the heather the first foreign churl that molests you "

"But your patrol had no right to seize me. In deep reverie, and pondering over many things, but chiefly on a sermon I was to preach to-morrow, I stumbled near your gates, but with no intention of espying your works, believe me. I repeat, sirs, ye have no right to seize me—I belong to God, and not to man. I belong neither to Wallenstein nor Tilly—to Christian nor Gustavus: I serve heaven, and not earth."

"Calm yourself, reverend sir," said I, approaching and taking him by the hand; "make way, gentlemen—'tis my friend, Father Ignatius, brother of my old preceptor, Dominie Daidle of Cromartie; one to whom I owe a reprieve from an unjust and shameful death."

A kind smile spread over his usually grim visage as I led him away, and he explained to me the circumstances of his capture, and how he had narrowly escaped being sent to enjoy the company of those glorious martyrs and old Scottish missionaries on whom his mind was constantly dwelling, and of whom his friend, Father Robert Strachan of Dundee, was preparing, as he told me, to give the world a history so ample, in his *Germania Christiana*. A musket-shot had been sent through the crown of his shovel-hat, and as such chapeaux were somewhat scarce in Stralsund, he contemplated the orifice with a rueful aspect, as he smoothed down the well-worn nap with his threadbare cuff.

During this, perceiving a half-starved little girl shivering in the doorway of a deserted house, the good but eccentric man (in imitation, I suppose, of St. Martin, when he rent his military cloak in twain, and divided it with a poor devil whom he met in the streets of Rome) tore off the long skirt of his cassock, spread it over the shoulders of the wanderer, and then stalked on beside me, looking altogether, with his long lean body in the short fragment of his garment and tight serge breeches, as remarkable and absurd as when he appeared before Ernestine in the drummer's doublet at Eckernfiörd.

I took him first to the residence of Ernestine, who had a sincere friendship for him, notwithstanding all his uncouth eccentricity; but, having much to relate, I will only rehearse briefly the news he gave us from the Imperial camp.

The losses endured by the troops of Wallenstein, he stated, were frightful; their trenches were now mere graves, where hecatombs of slain lay buried; but hordes of barbarian soldiers were pouring to his banner from Croatia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Upper Austria, so that severe and disastrous work was yet before us.

Bandolo had been lurking about the Imperial camp, coming and only in the night, when, like a wolf or jackal, he prowled

about those places where he could plunder the unburied dead; and, though fired at repeatedly, he had always escaped. A week ago, the regiment of Merodé had joined, and having marched through Hesinge, had there learned the whole story of Gabrielle's terrible fate. Colonel Johan de Vart (or Wert), a reckless soldier, on whom Carlstein had bestowed many favours, then challenged Merodé to single combat with rapier and pistols, on horseback, before the tent of Wallenstein. After a furious combat, the colonel ran the count fairly through the heart; and thus perished the primary cause of poor Gabrielle's death, but the actual perpetrator yet remained to be taken. By beat of drum Carlstein had offered three thousand ducats to any man who would bring Bandolo before him, dead or alive; Wallenstein had offered as much more from his own purse; Major-General Arnheim had added a thousand, and Camargo five hundred; thus a vast sum was now set on the head of the assassin, whom Count Tilly could no longer protect, even if he was disposed to do so. The cupidity of a hundred thousand men had been excited by the proffered reward, and Bandolo had been hunted from one hiding-place to another. For three days he had lurked among some rocks and woods near Hohendorf, where the count in person, with three squadrons of his Reitres, had tracked him like a wolf; and with these three squadrons he had once maintained a running fight for six hours. He was almost naked: in his superhuman exertions to elude pursuit, by rushing from rock to tree, and from tree to rock, his clothing had been torn to shreds, and little more remained than the belt and pouch of ammunition which supplied his murderous carbine. He did terrible execution among the count's Reitres! Concealing himself at one time behind a rock, at another behind a bush, or among the furze and long grass, he hovered within gunshot, and picked off the leading troopers, until—terrified by the havoc committed by his single arm, and by the miraculous manner in which he escaped their shots, as if he was bullet-proof; and, moreover, finding the perfect impracticability of pursuing in their heavy accoutrements a half-nude and wholly desperate man, who was strong as a lion, active as a lynx, and determined to die rather than be taken alive—Carlstein's Reitres had been compelled, but reluctantly, to relinquish the chase, and thus Bandolo had escaped.

"*Escaped!*" I exclaimed, and started to my feet; "ah! if I, with only six of our fleet Highland mountaineers, had been there, a different story had been told."

"Well, he escaped, and none, save myself, know to where; for he sent me a message by a poor Franciscan yesterday, that he was concealed in a cavern of the Isle of Rügen, which is now almost desolate; for Wallenstein's Orcs have pour

over it like a fiery scourge, driving all the inhabitants into the sea."

"You are sure he is there, sir?"

"Sure as that I now address you," continued the Jesuit, from whom I concealed the fierce exultation that arose within my breast; "but he will soon be discovered, and may Heaven, through the intercession of One more worthy than me, grant him that contrition and forgiveness for the horrors of his past life which I—by falling into the hands of your very unceremonious patrol—I am unable to afford him."

"And would you really have gone to him?" I asked, with unfeigned astonishment.

Bandolo has an immortal soul, as well as yourself, Captain Rollo; and had he slain my own father (and, Heaven knoweth, I loved little Gabrielle like a daughter of my own), it would have been but my duty to visit him when summoned on such an errand."

"What errand?" said I, drawing the buckle of my belt with impatience.

"He believed himself to be dying; and, if free and unfettered, on what plea could I withhold the last sacrament from a repentant sinner—one *in articulo mortis*, as he most probably is."

"And he is lurking——"

"In a cavern of the rocky Isle of Rügen—poor wretch!"

I turned away lest the simple-hearted priest should read the dark thoughts that flitted through my mind; for he thought that in Rügen, Bandolo was as safe from those in Stralsund as if he had been among the Norwegian Alps. All that long and terrible debt of vengeance, which time and atrocity had scored up between us, seemed now on the point of being paid off. In the keen exultation of the time, I had only one fear—that Bandolo might die ere I could reach him. Some may deem this sentiment revengeful and unchristian; but let me remind them that Stralsund was not the school wherein to learn the Christian virtues.

Concealing my future intentions under a mild exterior, after we left Ernestine, and when we walked through the streets towards the house of our preacher, where I intended to billet Father Ignatius, I acquired every necessary information about the Isle of Rügen. There were no Imperialists there now; the few inhabitants who had not been shot or driven into the sea, lurked in their half-ruined villages; and the cavern occupied by Bandolo lay among some rocks that overhung the Black Lake, near Stubbenkammer. Poor Father Ignatius, in the perfect simplicity of his heart, gave me all the information I required.

Already, in imagination, I saw Bandolo in his cavern; I could see him blindfolded! These little details occupied me until we reached the billet of our regimental minister, the Reverend Mr.

Gideon Geddes, to whom the burgomaster had carefully assigned one of the most comfortable, and (so far as cannon-balls were concerned) least exposed houses in Stralsund.

To him I introduced Father Ignatius, whom he welcomed with a sour smile, and after measuring him from top to toe with his eye, as if he was examining an adversary, invited him to partake of the supper which his servant was just then spreading on the table. I now bade their reverences adieu, and went in search of Phadrig Mhor.

I should have remembered that good and true, though homely adage, "concerning two of a trade," who seldom agree; and that our preacher's billet, though the largest house in Stralsund, was still not large enough to contain two such spirits as Father Ignatius, a follower of Loyola, and the Reverend Gideon Geddes, who had studied divinity at the ancient university of Glasgow. A tremendous explosion of polemics was the result!

The Reverend Gideon, a hard-featured, short-nosed, and wiry-haired little man, with eyes like a Skye-terrier, stiffly starched bands, and a sable cloak of the newest Geneva cut, was unguarded enough, in the very middle of supper, to make some caustic remarks concerning the absurdity of Lent and saints' festivals.

Father Ignatius defended both from Scripture.

The Reverend Gideon retorted by averring that the devil might quote Scripture; but that the church of Rome could never stand before the Bible, and that the triple-headed beast, which arose from the gates of hell, would soon be hurled behind them.

Irritated by this, Father Ignatius swelled up in his skirtless cassock, and told our chaplain that he was a blasphemous wretch, a preacher of heresy, a broken reed, and so forth—one who railed at a church which would yet overshadow the earth.

"Nay, nay," said our preacher, with a grin; "for lo you now! There riseth a tide which, from the shores of the Baltic, will flow to the Adriatic, and in its passage that tide shall sweep away Rome and its corruption. The force of opinion, and the valour of Gustavus and his host, will bear all before them. All the world knoweth that the crimes of the Cæsars, of Nero, Tiberius, and Heliogabalus, were as purity and innocence when compared to those of Pope Stephen and many of his successors, down to him who was the father of the Duke of Valentinois and Lucrezia Borgia."

"Wretch!" replied the Jesuit, "I only pray that Heaven may spare you to repent this blasphemy, or permit you by your invincible ignorance to escape the flames of the great abyss."

"Jesuit—I need no man's prayers," replied the sturdy Presbyterian, snapping his fingers; "my ain are enough, and may be mair than enough, for my purpose—but a Jesuit's—feich!"

"Sir," said the priest, proudly, "the Order of Jesus are the best soldiers of the church of Rome!"

"Likely enough," retorted Gideon; "for it's a kirk that's been unco fond of war of late."

Then arming himself with the famous folio Bible of Andro Hart of Edinburgh, and Calvin's *Commentaries*, he returned to the charge against Lent and images, and assailed poor Father Ignatius with such vigour and vituperation, and with such a noisy storm of hard Hebrew names, that he had great difficulty in keeping his ground; for our preacher was one of those clever fellows who take care to keep all the argument to themselves. At this crisis, when the battle was at the fiercest, a file of the quarter-guard were sent by Major Fritz, who separated the angry disputants, and conveyed the Jesuit to his own billet, at the house of the widow.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE BLACK LAKE OF STUBBENKAMER.

WITHOUT asking permission (for I knew that at such a time it would not be acceded to me), I selected Phadrig Mhor, and six of our musketeers who were western islesmen, and consequently accustomed to boating; and having procured a long, light, and sharp boat (one of the many that lay moored and now unclaimed beside the deserted mole), we pulled softly out into the Sound, and, favoured by the obscurity of the night, passed undiscovered between the galleys and gun-barges of Wallenstein.

My men were all M'Donalds, and were stout and active as mountain deer; they were all armed with sword and pistol, dirk and musket, and had left their plaids and all their heavier trappings behind them.

We pulled straight across towards the rocky Isle of Rügen, which is indented by innumerable bays and inlets, so that we had no fear of finding a place wherein to conceal our boat. This island, which is one of the largest in the Baltic, and was famous of old for the bravery and valour of its inhabitants, the Rugii, who worshipped the barbarous idol Hertha, rose in dusky and broken outline ahead, as the twinkling lights of Stralsund sank in the midnight mist astern.

My sturdy Celts soon shot their light boat across the narrow Sound; we ran it into a small creek, which lay a few hundred yards to the left of the landing-place near Oldevehr, and there concealed it among the thick underwood that overhung the rocks.

Ascending the narrow and now untrodden pathway that led directly to Bergen, the little capital which lies nearly in the

centre of the isle, we struck off immediately, by a road which Father Ignatius had described to me as leading to the lurking-place of Bandolo, and which, though a small and obscure track, my followers, to whom I imparted my purpose and all the bearings of the place, found with the instinct of true Highland foresters.

This island, where in after years our regiment achieved one of its most brilliant victories, measures about thirty miles each way; but so deeply are its rocky shores embayed by the sea, that no part can be further than three miles from the shore. Ruden, a little islet now lying in der Rugische Bodden, and anciently a part of it, was rent from the mainland by a tempest in the fourteenth century, when the sea burst through the isthmus, and formed a deep channel, through which the largest vessels can sail. The centre of the isle was so fruitful, that it was called the Granary of Stralsund; but now it was all desolate: the cattle and horses had been shot or carried off; the fields lay untilled; the farm-houses were burned or otherwise destroyed; and all the inhabitants had fled to Pomerania, save a few miserable beings who lurked in the half-ruined town of Bergen, or Gingst (a village of linen-weavers), or Arcona, where, on a stupendous rock, stands an ancient castle of the Vandals, containing the temple of their four-headed god, Sivantevite, in whose service were kept three hundred horses of spotless white, and whose worship was abolished by Waldemar of Denmark, when he conquered the island in 1168.

Aided by the rising moon, and guided by the landmarks, having frequently studied, during leisure hours at Stralsund, an old map of Pomerania and its islands, drawn by the geographer Ortelius, I led my party directly to that part of Rügen in which Father Ignatius had given me reason to believe Bandolo was lurking, like one of those wild wolves whose baying broke at times upon the solemn stillness of the midnight sky.

Unseen and in silence, we passed various little hamlets, such as Casnevitz on the right, Landau on the left, and Bergen, which lay fifteen miles distant from Stralsund, and was then diminished to about a hundred houses. By one of the country people (who speak a species of Solavonian) we were directed to turn round the angle of a bay which lay on our left; the waves of the sea were dashing on our right, and we threaded our way along a narrow granite ridge which leads to the wooded peninsula of Jasmünde, the northern extremity of which was that remarkable chalky cliff, six hundred feet high above the sea—the Stubbenkammer, the highest peak of which is named the Kœnigstuhl, or King's-chair. We had now reached the north-east point of the isle, and were more than four-and-twenty miles from Stralsund. The hour was about two in the morning; and thus, thanks to our

sturdy limbs and thews, we had got over a devious and difficult route in an incredibly short space of time.

Before us lay a wooded valley covered by dense timber, and darkened by the richest foliage. This was the forest of Jasmünde, which supplied all Rügen with fuel. Beyond it rose the headland called the Cape of Stubbenkammer, against whose base of rock the Baltic rolled its waves; and between us and the moon, like a deep basin girdled in by the wooded hills, lay the *Black Lake*, overlooked by the cavern which, as the Jesuit had assured me, was occupied by Bandolo, and lay directly *opposite* the path by which we approached its bank.

"Softly now, Phadrig," said I; "we are right upon the trail of the wolf; keep under the foliage, for although the lake is a quarter of a mile broad, he may detect us by the light of that beautiful moon."

"Some one has passed this way but a short time ago," said Phadrig, who was on his knees, examining like a Highland huntsman the pathway, which was covered with grass.

"Ah!—and in what direction?" I asked.

"Towards the water; for in that way the pressure lies, and the leaves and twigs on each side are tossed in that direction."

"You have sharp eyes, Phadrig! can you detect anything more?"

"Only, that the footmarks are those of a man by their weight and size."

"Good—we are on the scent, then!"

"A barefooted man," added one of our soldiers; "see, Sergeant Mhor M'Farquhar, the blades of grass are neither broken nor cut by brogue nor boot, but just pressed flat."

"Eachin M'Donuil is right, sir," said Phadrig, erecting his tall figure; "and, moreover," he added, sinking his voice, "at every second footmark there is the angular indent of a musket-butt. I will therefore say that the man has been armed, barefooted, and weary, and leaned on his gun as he walked towards the loch-side; but there we lose the track."

"He has either swum over, or gone round by the water-side," said I, "for the cave lies opposite."

By stooping down, we could perceive under the dark brow of a wooded cliff, and close to the water, a darker spot, which we had no doubt was the identical and primitive habitation we were in search of.

"Let us separate," said Phadrig: "I will go round by the left, with Eachin M'Donuil and his brother; if you, Captain Bollo, will take the right, with their two comrades."

"Very good, Phadrig, and we will steal softly towards the cavern, which must be our meeting-place. Look once more to your muskets and powder—be wary, as if you were tracking a

wild bull by the shores of Lochindall or the Mull of O'e at home in Isla—and every man of you shall have a piece of gold to string at his bonnet-lug for this night's work, and more."

We separated, and, diving into the coppice, crept stealthily round the lake, pausing frequently to listen to any passing sound; but all was still as the grave. Over the bare scalp of the Stubbenkamer, the cold white moonlight streamed into the silent and wooded hollow, silvering the leaves, and the still, waveless surface of the lake. Not a branch stirred, for the wind was breathless, and the fleecy clouds were floating unmoved in the wide blue sky.

As we crept round with panther-like steps, and with that noiseless motion which the foresters of the Highland woods naturally acquired, like the Indians of America, by their habits of war and hunting, my mind was fully occupied by the anticipation of capturing Bandolo, and meting out upon his head the punishment which his life of atrocity so well merited, and which I believed no human hand could make sufficiently severe, there recurred to me a story (concerning this very lake in the wood of Jasmünde) which I remembered to have read in Cluverius; and which, if I had related it to my followers, might have put them all to flight; for although they were fellows who would have faced Satan himself by daylight, the same personage in the dark was quite another matter.

Cluverius asserts that this Black Lake is of wondrous depth; that it is bottomless; and, though teeming with fish, is the abode of demons, who will not permit either boats to swim on its surface or nets to sink into its waters, which, like the wood around them, were sacred to the goddess Hertha and her brother Nikelas, on whose altars the early Christians were yearly sacrificed. Cluverius relates, that in his own time some of the Rugii brought a boat to the lake one evening, and returned next day with the intention of fishing; but, lo! to their astonishment, it had disappeared. After a long search, the boat was discovered, thrown on the top of one of the most gigantic beech-trees, and dangling far beyond their reach. As they shrunk back, they muttered one to another—

"'Tis the devils of the Stubbenkamer who have done this!"

"*It was not the devils,*" cried a terrible voice, from the bosom of the lake; "*but only my brother Nikelas and I.*"

"We can only suppose," adds Cluverius, "that the unclean spirits, being wroth at the abolition of their worship, still love to play their tricks where idolatry was practised of old."

After considerable labour in piercing the thick barriers of tangled briars, furze, and roots of old and decayed trees, that encircled the lake, but shrouded from Bandolo's eye by the foliage with which our dark-green tartans blended, crawling on our

hands and knees, and dragging our muskets after us, we softly approached the low brow of rock that overhung the water, and in the face of which there yawned a cavern, having a mouth like some low rustic arch, against the piers of which the water chafed in tiny ripples, but the recesses of which probably pierced the profundity of the Stubbenkamer.

A sound like the croak of a crow announced to us that our comrades were within pistol-shot on the opposite side ; a M'Donald replied by another sound like the whirr of a partridge, these being the signals agreed upon. Suddenly a wild and haggard figure came forth from the chasm. It was Bandolo, the assassin of Gabrielle !

My breath came thick and fast, and I heard the click of locks as my men cocked their muskets. We were within twenty feet of him, yet he saw us not. He leaned with his hands crossed and his chin resting on the muzzle of a long Spanish musket, which I thus supposed to be unloaded. He was pale and ghastly ; for wounds, want, fatigue, and danger had wrought their worst upon him. His coal-black hair hung in matted elf-locks around his neck, and over his eyes and ears ; a thick beard bristled on his chin ; his hollow and glistening eye gazed, with a wild and unsettled expression, alternately on the sailing moon and the deep still waters of the placid lake. He was almost nude, having nothing upon him but the tattered remains of a shirt and a pair of breeches. His brown and muscular arms and legs, from knee downwards, were bare ; his breast was also bare, save where crossed by the belt of a cartridge-pouch and the fluttering rags of what had been a shirt. He was the very personification of a hunted wild beast—of a devil cast out from the society of devils—or of what he was, a wretch against whom all men had lifted up their hands, and whose hands were uplifted against all men.

One of my soldiers blew his match, and the red glow caught Bandolo's haggard eye. He uttered a growl, snatched his musket, and, rushing on one side, was confronted by the towering figure of Phadrig Mhor, with his Lochaber axe upraised, and the barrels of two muskets levelled right at his head.

Gnashing his teeth with rage and astonishment, he uttered a bitter curse, and turned to the other side, between the lake and rocks, but was there met by the brass orb of my target, my up-lifted claymore, and two musket-barrels also levelled straight at his head. Uttering a howl of wrath and fury, he made a motion as if to leap into the lake, and then, changing his intention, rushed into the cavern ; and now we were somewhat puzzled, for we knew not the depth or the windings of the place, from the recesses of which he might easily shoot us all down by his wily aim if we entered ; for the reflection of the moon from

the lake would enable him to fire with terrible precision, while we could not give him back a shot in return.

There was a pause. Eachin M'Donuil stooped down and fired into the cavern at random; at the same moment a ball from Bandolo grazed his head, and the double report reverberated among the woods and in the far recesses of the granite rocks in which the fissure yawned.

"Dia! this will never do," said the islesman, as he drew back to reload; "it is always darkest under a lamp. We may be within arm's-length of this fellow, and yet not see him."

"Let us all rush in," said I; "he cannot knock us all on the head. Come, my boys! with a good cause and a day's pay one may face the devil!"

But they were too wary; and, brave as they were, drew back, saying—

"And if *you* are shot, Captain Rollo, who will tell the marshal why we left Stralsund?"

I was somewhat at a loss how to proceed, for to besiege Bandolo in the cavern and starve him out, would be a tedious and dangerous process; as we would have to starve ourselves in the first place, and run the risk of being killed or captured if any of the Imperialists paid the isle a visit from the Duke of Friedland's camp; but Phadrig and our four M'Donalds were well versed in all the tactics of mountain warfare, and prepared at once to *smoke* him out. While two kept guard with their muskets cocked, the others hewed down a quantity of decayed wood, and hurled over bundles of withered grass and the last year's leaves. In the midst of these I threw a flaming match, ignited by snapping a musket; the leaves, grass, and branches shot up into a flame, and upon that flame we threw a vast number of branches freshly hewn from pine-trees. Phadrig continued to cleave down the resinous boughs and green saplings, and these, which were to smoulder, were mingled with drier branches to burn; thus the fire and smoke rapidly increased together. As they rose, they were caught by the arch of the fissure, into which they were rolled by a west wind that blew across the Black Lake.

The wooded amphitheatre, of which its placid waters seemed to form the arena, glowed in light; the leaves of the distant trees reddened in the gleam, and a long line of wavering fire streamed from the narrow rocks across the bosom of the lake, whose woods and waters were all unchanged, as when the priests of Hertha raised their flaming altars by its wild sequestered shore.

The M'Donalds continued this work in grim silence, which they interrupted only by a low and fierce remark in Gaëlic; for these four men were the sole survivors of the clan Donald of Eig

nearly the whole of whom were smoked to death in a great cavern by M'Lean of that ilk.*

I now applied my sword to the work, and hewed away with right good will, heaping branches of every kind upon the flame below us; the rocks soon became blackened, and the flame, as it licked their granite faces, scorched off the grass and flowers. The smoke rapidly became a dark volume, stifling even to ourselves, and now day began to dawn on the bare scalp of the Kœningstuhl.

For nearly an hour the fire had burned, and Phadrig was beginning to express fears that Bandolo was no longer in the cavern, but had escaped by some secret outlet; when, lo! I heard a wild and despairing cry, followed by the discharge of two muskets, and, escaping both, Bandolo darted out of his lurking-place, scattering the blazing brands with his bare feet, and—with his eyes starting from their sockets, his face pale as fear, fury, and wrath could make it, his long black hair streaming on the wind, his long musket brandished aloft, butt uppermost—burst out through the smoke and flame, and, with a thousand red sparks adhering to his hair and tattered garments, fled like a dun deer up the side of the wooded hill.

Unwearied by our long march from Oldevehr, and being refreshed by the halt at the cavern-mouth, and the cool morning air, we sprang away in pursuit, dashing up the ascent like true mountaineers, or like the Luath and Bran of other times. Bandolo frequently paused and staggered round to fire a shot at whoever chanced to be foremost in pursuit; but whenever he halted, we either threw ourselves flat among the long rank grass, or darted behind the nearest tree, for the mossy trunks of the firs and ashes grew thickly on the sides of the Kœningstuhl.

As we followed him in a half-circle, keeping about a hundred yards apart, and thus forming a radius of six hundred yards, he soon found the impossibility of outflanking us on either side, and had to abandon what was evidently his wish, to descend again towards that wooded hollow from whence we had driven him. He was now compelled to continue his flight towards the Kœningstuhl, whose bare, chalky scalp we could perceive above us, gilded by the rising sun, as we left the woods behind, and pursued this frantic and desperate man to the very summit of the mountain, which, being hewn into two halves by some mighty convulsion of nature, has formed an abrupt precipice above the chafing waves, and is named the Stubbenkamer—or most northern promontory of Rügen. Before him lay the wide expanse of the Baltic ocean, gleaming in purple and yellow as

* Their bones may still be seen, strewing the floor of this cavern in Elgg, one of the Western Isles.

the sun arose from its shining waters, then dotted by many a distant sail, bearing away towards the far-off gulfs of Finland and Bothnia. At his feet yawned an abyss, where the waves foamed on the reefs of chalky rock, and behind were six strong and active men, all armed to the teeth, and bent on his destruction. Poor wretch! on every side was death, and in his heart—despair!

There was neither remedy, succour, hope, nor escape—and now, like a famished or hunted wolf, he turned and faced us at the verge of the precipice. Wild, ferocious, strong, and athletic, blackened and scorched by the fire through which he had passed—he stood, like a naked Hercules, with his muscular figure towering in full relief against the brightness of that orient morning sky which spread behind him.

As we approached him all our muskets were empty, and my men were deliberately reloading. His we knew to be loaded, and he was examining the lock and priming as we drew near. He was a deadly shot, and out of six of us *one* was certain to fall. I had no doubt that his last bullet was meant for me; so I covered my breast with my light Highland target as we advanced, resolving, at all risks, to rush upon him sword in hand whenever I came near enough. Instead of levelling his musket against us, he placed the butt upon the ground and the muzzle under his chin—

“Ha—ha!” said he, in a husky voice; “did you think of taking Bandolo alive? My hour is come—all is confused and terrible! see—there are other men among you—and women too—dim shadows, with glaring eyes, and bosoms gashed by pistol-shots and dagger-wounds! (He passed his hand over his eyes.) Ha, ha, ha! ’tis all a dream—I rave! Look upon my sufferings—these wasted arms, these tattered rags—these hollow cheeks, these wounds and bruises—these scorched and blackened scars! Gloat upon them even as I would have gloated upon your confusion, shame, and agony in an hour like this; but Bandolo eludes you thus in death, as in life he has eluded thousands!”

He touched the trigger with his foot—shot himself through the head, and fell whizzing through the air into the abyss below.

At the moment he did this, we were almost within arm’s-length of him; and never, until my own hour comes, shall I forget the terrible expression of his ghastly face, and the convulsed heaving of his vast chest and shoulders. We peered over the giddy verge, where, five hundred feet below, the white-edged waves were chafing on the chalky beach; but we could see no trace of the wretched suicide.

And yet, strange though it may appear, he did not then die.

Three days afterwards, Sir Nickelas Valdemar, when cru-

off the Stubbenkamer, perceived the body of a man lying upon the beach, and sent a boat's crew ashore; and Bandolo (though the sailors knew him not) was found by them with life still lingering in his shattered frame. But what was his condition?

The ball, which entered his chin, had passed out through his nose, by the angle at which he held his head; thus no vital part was injured. The sea refused to drown him, and had flung him back upon the shelving shore, and there, with his shattered head and broken limbs, he lay naked and slowly dying, for the powers of life were wonderfully tenacious within him. The seagulls and cormorants had sat upon his breast, and torn the flesh from his face, and the hair from his temples, yet he could not resist them. Swarms of insects had buzzed about his wounds, and inserted their suckers, till the spray of the ocean washed them off, and left its bitter salt to render sharper yet the gnat and hornet's sting.

We are left to imagine the despairing cries he may have uttered to God for pity, and to man for help—cries heard only by the wild and the flitting seabirds;—we are left to imagine the burning thirst that must have scorched his vitals, and the complication of agony endured by him from so many wounds and sores; and, greater yet than all, the scorpion's sting of wakened conscience, that, like boiling lead, falling drop by drop upon his breast, must have tortured his dying hours—for they were many.

Why pursue further this revolting description of the wrath and retribution exercised by Fate upon his miserable frame? Blind, for the gulls had torn his eyes from their sockets; maimed, for his limbs had been shattered by falling into the shallow water; tortured to madness by thirst, by the reptiles and salt that festered together in his wounds—he was found by the sailors of Sir Nickelas, who could only survey him with horror and astonishment, as he lay dying and despairing with his battered frame partly merged in the rippling water.

One, less feeling than his companions, stirred Bandolo with an oar, and he immediately expired. Then a shot was attached to his heels, and, dragged off the shelf of rock by a boat-hook, the body was immediately buried in the sea. It was not for some months after this that I learned this terrible sequel to the story of his fate, and to our adventure on the Stubbenkamer.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

THE BLACK PLAGUE.

“**BEING** that Bandolo had perished at the moment he disappeared over the Stubbenkamer, we descended the Koningstuhl, took the direct road along the granite isthmus towards

Bergen, which we reached about mid-day, and where we were hospitably entertained by the burgomaster, who was very friendly to us, as foes of the Imperialists; for Bogislaus IV., Duke of Pomerania and Rügen, was in alliance with the northern kings. As the duke's vassal, he considered it his duty to show us every attention, and procured us a wagon, drawn by two stout horses, by which we travelled towards the Sound. I took care that the night should be set in before we reached Oldevehr, for the narrow strait was full of Austrian gun-boats.

In the creek, we found our little shallop still safe in its concealment, and, embarking, put forth before the moon rose, and reached the mole of Stralsund in safety, but to find that we had now to encounter another and more terrible foe than starvation or the Imperialists.

A pestilence, like unto that terrible *Black Plague* which desolated Denmark in the thirteenth century, and carried off two-thirds of the inhabitants, committing irreparable injury on its agriculture and commerce,—a pestilence now conducted by starvation and misery, by excitement, grief, and poverty, and by the terrible malaria arising from the slime of the wet ditches, the sluices of which had been destroyed by the Austrian artillery, and increased by the fetid atmosphere of the shallow trenches, where Wallenstein had buried vast numbers of his slain to windward of the city, for so I may call it, from the long prevalence of the wind in one direction—a pestilence that assailed the old and the young, the active and the listless, the brave soldiers who manned the ramparts and the timid citizens who lurked in their cellars to avoid the bursting bombs and passing cannon-shot,—had now broken out in Stralsund, to increase the troubles, the anxieties, and the already manifold dangers of the siege.

In one day this terrible epidemic had seized on more than fifty persons. Next day there were a hundred victims. No pen can convey an adequate idea of the terror of the Stralsunders. The upper classes, however, comforted themselves that the pest confined itself as yet to the lower—those poor, haggard, and wretched beings whom lack of raiment, work, and food, made their shattered frames, like those of the drunken and the dissipated, most liable to infection.

In three days it spread so fast that three hundred perished. Many rushed to schnaps and corn-brandy to drown their cares and apprehensions; and those unhappy wretches, in a state of madness and intoxication, were frequently seen rushing, half nude, from the lower purlieus of the city, pale, wan, and ghastly, or livid and yellow as oranges, uttering shrieks of blasphemy and lewdness, and making us shudder at the thought of the terrible scenes enacted in the dens from whence they had come. Into these places our men were reluctant to penetrate to bur-

the dead, many of whom we knew to be lying uncoffined and unshrouded. But the orders of the marshal were not to be resisted. Men were required to volunteer for the burial service as for a forlorn hope, and liberal supplies of corn-brandv were given to those who did so. Colonel Döbbelsteirn's Dutchmen, immoveable and phlegmatic fellows, had this duty luckily assigned to them. Deep trenches were dug outside the Frankendör, and into these the dead (many of whom were worn to mere skeletons by famine and sickness) were flung over each other, pell-mell, old men and little children, side by side, and there we covered them up, shovelling great piles of earth, stones, and rubbish over them.

This malignant pest soon spread into our own ranks, and terrible havoc it made among our brave Highlanders. This was soon perceptible by the diminution of our numbers; for every company, as it came to its post at the Frankendör, lacked an officer, a sergeant, and ten, fifteen, or twenty of its files. The churches were turned into hospitals, where, with no other bedding than straw and their plaids, our soldiers lay side by side, and dying fast from lack of sufficient medical attendance; and being rendered—by their previous scanty food, the low and foggy atmosphere, the putrid effluvia of the German trenches, the malaria of our own stagnant ditches—peculiarly liable to attack, and less able to resist it.

The chief of our medical staff, Dr. Pennicuik of that ilk, was of more service than twenty of the Danish doctors; while it was pleasing to see the Rev. Gideon Geddes and Father Ignatius emulating each other, and working side by side like good Samaritans among the sick and dying; yet not so oblivious of their former polemics, as to resist the opportunity of firing an occasional shot at each other over the very corpse of some poor fellow whose spirit had eluded both their kind efforts to detain him here. Stralsund became a mere charnel-house; now it was that I trembled for Ernestine, and wished her in the Imperial camp—anywhere but within those walls, which engirt so much suffering and so many new miseries, in addition to those caused by scarcity of food and the cannonading by land batteries and gun-boats on the Sound. I was reluctant and terrified to enter her presence, lest I should convey that pestilence for which I had no fear personally, and the cautions I gave were countless. When not on duty, Phadrig Mhor and Gillian M'Bane were installed as a *garde du corps*, and occupied the lower story of the house, with orders to bar ingress to all under pain of death; but now none came hither; for Father Ignatius had the good sense to remain away, and Ian Dhu never came nearer the door than the garden plot, where he was wont to converse for a few minutes and then retire, for no entreaty of Ernestine could induce him enter.

One forenoon, when the frowsy November fog was rising like a veil from the face of the beleaguered city, I had come off guard at the Frankendör. Culcraigie's company had relieved mine, which I dismissed to their comfortless billets in the marketplace, and then hurried, as was my wont, to inquire for Ernestine. I observed that the gate of the garden stood wide open, that the house-door was ajar, and that all the blinds in front were still drawn closely down, although the noon was approaching. A pang of terror shot through me, for usually the gate and door were kept shut, and at such an hour the blinds were always drawn up, and the smiling face of Ernestine was the first object that greeted me. But on this morning the blinds remained motionless, and no face was smiling there.

I rushed into the vestibule, and found M'Bane fast asleep on a bench. The poor fellow was exhausted.

"Gillian, thou glaiket gilly," said I; "how and where is the young lady?"

"Where?"

"Yes—where? Must I prick you with my skene-dhu? Where is she?"

"Gone to the hospital."

"Hospital!" I gasped as if a ball had passed through my heart. "To the great church opposite the Bourse?"

"Yes, captain; a poor gilly like me could never gainsay that—"

I rushed through the streets, on my way passing two carts laden with the dead who had died over-night—pale, frightful, and emaciated remains; but decently covered by a pall of white linen cloth. These were on their way to the trenches, and were surrounded by a half-intoxicated party of Dubbelsteirn's musketeers, armed only with shovels and mattocks. On one of those carts lay the body of Major Fritz, which, as a mark of respect, had been rolled up in one of the blankets of his bed, and was tied in three places with rough cord. Poor Fritz! even his widow's doubloons, her dinners and her wine (when others had none), could not save him from the pest. Reaching the church, I entered for the first time the abode of more mental and bodily suffering than I (devoutly) hope it may ever be my lot to see again. It presented a complication of all that was terrible and revolting.

Our soldiers lay in rows; a few on pallets, a few on trusses of straw, but many more on the cold pavement, which bore the long German epitaphs and polished brasses of the men of other times. There were patients in all stages of this putrid and malignant fever—from him who was merely affected by premonitory pains in the head, and the throbbing of the temporal artery to him whose bloodshot eyes were red as living coals, who had the hissing of serpents in his ears, whose breath was but a suc

cession of laborious sighs, whose swollen tongue was white as coral or black as ebony, and whose skin was spotted like a leper's; for this pest was the worst species of that which is known in Europe as the putrid fever, and was accompanied by such excruciating pains in the stomach and loins that the patients speedily became collapsed and exhausted.

Many of our strongest, our best, and bravest soldiers were lying there cold and stiff, with glazed eyes, with relaxed jaws, and forms wasted to the mere shadows of what they were. Others were in all the agonies of death, with foam on their lips, their eyes red as blood, their tongues hard and white. Others were trembling as if in ague fits; many were delirious, and sang Highland coronachs, low, sad, and wailing; and some, who imagined themselves at home, were caressing and talking to those relations and lovers their fancy had conjured up. Many more believed themselves engaged, and encouraged each other by slogans and outcries.

"Cairne na' cuimhne!" I heard a M'Farquhar shout, with the voice of a stentor; "club your muskets—come on, loiterers! Dirk and claymore is the order!"

"Go, go!" replied another delirious man, with scorn; "teach your mother how to make brose! Dost think 'tis the first time I have smelt powder or heard the clash of swords? Go—I am one of the clan Donnoquhy!"

Full of gloom and despondency, the Germans were swearing, while the Frenchmen chatted and sang. What a medley it was! But in some places there were sounds of prayer and lamentation: these were principally among our own soldiers. In a corner, Torquil Gorm, our pipe-major, was praying in touching terms that the blessed *Iosa Criosd*, *Mhic Daibhi*, *Mhic Abraham*, would have mercy upon his sufferings. In another place, Donald M'Vurich was lamenting over his dead comrade, a M'Intosh, and repeatedly exclaiming—

"Who among the Clanchattan was like thee, O Ronald Glas? Would to Heaven that I—poor Donald—might have satisfied death by dying in your place!"

These men had only been shepherds at home; yet Donald's grief was worthy of Athens or Sparta. It is not always under the garments of purple and fine linen that we find the noblest hearts.

The genius who presided over this harrowing scene was Dr. Pennicuik, our surgeon-general, a kind, good man, and able leech. He was disrobed to his shirt and breeches, with his sleeves rolled up and his hands dyed in blood, for he was bleeding the patients as fast as they were borne in, and the blood was carried away by his assistants in large tin basins. There, too, were the venerated Gideon Geddes and Father Ignatius, both ministering

to the bodily and spiritual wants of such as would receive attention at their hands; but they sometimes made mistakes, for our chaplain might approach some red-hot Romanist, while the poor Jesuit applied himself to some sour Presbyterian, by whom he was repulsed with very little ceremony. At last they both fastened upon one old Gaël, who appeared to be nothing in particular, and on being asked what he was, replied, in a faint voice—

"One of the clan Donald."

"But of what persuasion?"

"A musketeer of Culeraigie's company."

This man was elderly, and his hair was white as snow. He was dying, and his son, Eachin M'Donuil, who had recently accompanied me to Rügen, held up his head that he might hear the solemn prayers and exhortations of the two pastors, who required him to forgive all his enemies, that he might die at peace with all mankind. This he avowed himself quite willing to declare, excepting so far as concerned the M'Leods of M'Leod, the destroyers of his race in Eigg; and, at the thought of them, the old man's dying orbs flashed fire.

Then he was told that he must forgive all without exception, or all their exhortations and his repentance were in vain.

"Well," said he, with an effort, as he grasped his son's hand and a vindictive gleam passed over his stern grey eyes, "if it must be so, I forgive the M'Leods, but *remember them, you, my son Eachin—remember!*" With these words he expired; and Eachin kissed first the cold brow of his father, and then the blade of his dirk.

I thanked Heaven on perceiving Ernestine, not, as in my first terror I had expected, stretched among the females in that portion of the church which had been screened off for them, but on her knees between the pallets of two soldiers, to whom she was administering something prepared for them by the surgeon. Inspired by a fit of piety, or benevolence, or mercy (which you will), or by that pure and beautiful zeal which leads the Sisters of Mercy to visit the abodes of suffering, poverty, and misery, she had stolen to this frightful hospital to minister to the sick. But she—so highly born, so cultivated in mind and refined in nature, so gentle, so sensitive, and full of emotions of pity—had over-calculated her own strength of purpose, and now trembled at the unexpected and revolting horrors combined in that dismantled and crowded church.

"Ah, Ernestine!" said I, "what frenzy brought you here—and on such an errand? You were never meant for drudgery such as this, and now you have rendered all my care and anxiety vain, perhaps most fatally vain, by running into the jaws of disease and death."

"Pardon me," said she, raising her pale face and saddened eyes

to mine. "It was a sudden thought—a happy gleam—that a few good deeds done in the name of Gabrielle (for this was her birthday) might please her spirit, dear Philip, that was all—a few good deeds done in the name of our poor Gabrielle, for the good of the suffering and the glory of Heaven."

"At the risk of your own life, Ernestine!"

"Chide her not, captain," said the harsh voice of Gideon Geddes; "for in one hour she hath done more than ten surgeons. The merciful are blessed, for they shall obtain mercy. But," he added, in a friendly whisper, "take her away, for this is no place for dames of high degree."

"My good child," said Father Ignatius, with a kind smile on his long and lantern-jawed face, "I love most to see deeds of mercy when they come from a woman's hand, and brother Geddes hath quoted rightly."

"Brither Geddes meaneth, that the blessedness of the merciful consisteth in what they receive—not what they *give*," retorted our testy preacher; "for I do not believe that we can be saved by works alone; and, moreover, do not the Gospels say——" he continued, erecting his short punchy figure, and preparing even there to plunge into a controversy, which the doctor at once interrupted by despatching them on separate errands.

"Philip," said Ernestine, in a low voice, "take me away, for the atmosphere of this place is stifling."

I gladly led her out into the purer air of the street, where the noonday sun was shining, and where, overcome by all she had seen and heard, she burst into a flood of tears.

"Ay, Ernestine," said I, as a shot from the enemy's batteries whistled over our heads, "here is much to shock a girl like you: war, pestilence, and famine are no trifling foes to encounter."

Another shot, a thirty-six pounder, struck a pinnacle of the church and hurled it into the street; for now, taking advantage of our lessened numbers, the Imperialists had pushed their batteries, trenches, and parallels far round the flank of the Frankendör, and were almost within pistol-shot. In some places we could hear the voices of Carlstein's pioneers, as they laughed and sang at their work behind the ramparts of earth.

By a circuitous route, and through streets, the ends of which Leslie had protected by barricades and traverses of earth and timber, turf and stone, I conveyed Ernestine back to her pretty mansion-house; and, though I gave Phadrig and Gillian stricter orders than before concerning the admission of visitors, I feared much that the effect of her entering such a den of disease as the great church would prove fatal, and my forebodings were but too sadly realized.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE PLAGUE SPOT.

NEXT day I received a slight wound in the left shoulder from the ball of a carbine; for the Imperialists were now close upon the Frankendör, the whole defence of which was still committed to our shattered regiment by Sir Alexander Leslie, who put implicit trust in us. I had it dressed by a passing surgeon, as I had no wish to risk myself near the frightful hospitals; and, on the firing ceasing, I went to visit Ernestine.

I found her in the little boudoir, and there was something about it and her too that alarmed me; but then, perhaps, I was weak and nervous. Provisions were so scarce that, though she knew it not, I had tasted nothing for two days. She was reclining in a large gilded fauteuil of yellow damask, stuffed with down, and her tiny feet rested on a tabourette of the same.

The room was darkened by the blinds being closely drawn; but the windows were open, and through them there swept a warm breeze, that played with the heavy hangings of velvet, and wafted the perfume of flowers from a large stand of green-painted wood bearing three rows of Dresden china vases, each containing the few flowers of the season.

She was dressed in white satin, brocaded with red flowers; it was a dress I had given her; and to please me, doubtless, she had put it on, together with a pair of beautiful pearl bracelets, for which I had given to one of Karl's pistoliers six dollars, without asking him any questions.

"Dear Ernestine, you are unwell!" said I, on perceiving that she made but a languid motion of her hand as I approached her.

"No, no!" she replied; "but the memory of all I saw yesterday affects me still—and these decayed flowers, perhaps—there, thank you," she added, as I flung the flowers referred to into the street.

She looked very pale, and I thought the tone of her voice was altered.

Next day she was even paler, and her languid air was unmistakeable. The room was shaded as before, and she sat near the half-opened window, to enjoy the cool breeze that swept over the Sound of Rügen. I hoped it was merely the deprivation of many little luxuries with which I had contrived to furnish her, long after every one else in Stralsund had ceased to think of them. Prudentia and her spouse had kindly sent me some of these things; but a few days before I had visited the shop at the corner of the Bourse, and found it closed, with a *red cross* chalked on the door. The plague had been there, and the drivers

of the death-carts were to call for the dead on their way to the trenches.

Instead of being curled according to the fashion, in little ringlets all round her charming face, Ernestine had her black hair smoothly and plainly braided over her temples; her dress was still the white brocade with the pearl bracelets; but to-day, although her face was paler still, she assured me with a smile, that she was "quite well."

She remained with her left cheek resting upon her hand, and when caressingly I attempted to kiss it, I felt as if an arrow had pierced my heart, on perceiving that which she had been striving to conceal from me—a round hectic mark, about the size of a dollar.

It was the plague spot!

Some frivolous remark, the natural impulse of a toying lover, died away on my lips as I saw this horrible mark, and with agony became convinced that the finger of death had printed it there. I glanced at her face.

It seemed so much paler since yesterday! It was cold, frozen, and sad-looking, even when she strove to smile. Its beauty had become severe, and she seemed taller than usual in her long white stomacher. In that darkened room she looked like a white spirit, or a statue of snowy marble. Her eyes had lost their beautiful language. Sadness, intense sadness, alone remained.

"Ah! do not touch me," said she, withdrawing her hand; "leave me, Philip—leave me now!"

"Ernestine!" I exclaimed, and passionately clasping her to my breast, burst into tears.

She endeavoured to elude me, and begged, entreated, and implored me to leave her, lest I, too, might perish by her fatal touch; but I wished for nothing more. Yet I hoped she might be saved, and starting from her side, I summoned Gillian M'Bane, and despatched him for Doctor Pennicuik; I then summoned Ernestine's female attendants, who had her placed in bed.

In two hours I saw her again.

She was delirious, and imagined herself with Gabrielle and her father. Her once beautiful eyes had become bloodshot and red as coral; there was a little line of foam round her lips, and spots of purple were on her cheeks and brow.

Oh, the agony of a sight like that! Honest Pennicuik hurried me roughly but kindly out of her apartment, and, thrusting me into a fauteuil, made me drink a glass or two of his medicated hospital wine.

Let me hurry over the relation and the memory of those sad hours of hopeless sorrow and futile anxiety.

On the second day, the fever and the delirium passed away, and I was permitted to see her; for Father Ignatius, with more

than usual gravity on his long and solemn face, came to tell me that she was dying.

Dying! The good man gave me his arm, for I was very weak, and a partial blindness had come over me. I hoped it was the plague, that I might go with Ernestine; but, alas! it was only the result of sheer hunger, grief, and excitement.

I stood by her bedside in that darkened chamber, the features of which are still before me; its atmosphere was close and sickly; there were vials and bottles, cups and cordials, and between the festooned curtains a pale and sickly face, with inflamed eyes and purple spots upon a snowy skin, that contrasted powerfully with two massive braids of sable hair. And this was Ernestine!

Kneeling down by the side of the bed, I stooped my brow upon her thin wan hand, and wept as if my heart would burst. Ernestine also wept, but in silence; tear after tear rolled over her hollowed cheek, for she was too feeble to raise her head, and we muttered only incoherent sentences of sorrow and endearment, which it were useless to commit to paper; for to some they might seem exaggerated, to others perhaps too cold and passionless, as I can neither impart to them nor to the reader the agony that thrilled our hearts, though the memory of that keen agony yet lingers in my soul, like an old and painful dream.

In expression her eyes were sad and fixed; there was a smile of ineffable sweetness playing about her thin white lips; but the dew of death was on her brow and about her braided hair. Believing that she was about to rejoin her sister, the poor girl said to me—

"I have been praying for you, and for myself—thus, like St. Monica, sending my most pious thoughts as harbingers to heaven. I am going to Gabrielle—ah, how she loved me!"

I could only murmur her name; then she put forth her dear lip affectionately for one more kiss. I became bewildered, and an emotion of wild satisfaction stole into my heart.

"'Tis the plague—it has seized me, too!" I muttered, joyfully. "Dear Ernestine, I will soon follow you!"

The film was again spreading over my eyes, and there was a hissing in my ears; yet I felt the cold hand of Ernestine clasped in mine, and knew that its grasp was relaxing.

Then I heard the voice of honest Father Ignatius saying in my ear, and with a voice rendered husky by emotion—

"She is dead—God receive her sinless soul! Close her eyes, and kiss her, Philip—all is over now."

At that moment I heard the wheels of the dead-cart rattling over the street, and the jangle of its hateful bell.

Of that mournful day I remember no more!

* * * *

Next day I recovered, as one who awakes from a deep sleep,

and all the events of yesterday rushed like a torrent of grief and pain upon my mind. Father Ignatius, who had relapsed into his immobility of aspect and demeanour, knelt at the fauteuil, reading his daily office out of a little brass-bound breviary, which he closed the moment I moved. I was lying on the floor, with a cloak spread over me.

"Would you like to see her?" he asked, in a voice of kindness.

"Lead me there, if you please."

"Then I pray you follow me."

I stood in the chamber of death, and there was in it an awful stillness that deeply impressed me.

She was dead—this being whom I had loved with my whole heart, and with my whole soul, *was dead!* yet I had neither a prayer nor a tear. I could neither form one nor yield the other. I was frozen—stunned! She was dead! and these three words seemed written before me everywhere: there was a horrid stillness in my heart, and in everything around me. The whole world seemed to be standing still; and what was now my Ernestine?

I looked upon her, but could not realize her death. The dark hair, which she was wont to dress so gracefully, was smoothed in modest braids over her pale and stone-like brow. They were very still—those glossy braids; and not a breath of air disturbed them, though the breeze lifted the leaves of her now neglected flowers. Her birds were chirping near, for their seed-boxes were empty now; the Jesuit observed this, and, notwithstanding all his sternness, even at that dreadful time he filled them, for the old man's heart was a very kind one.

Her eyes—those deep, dark, glorious eyes—were sightless now; turned back within their snow-white lids, from which the long lashes fell upon her marble cheek. Her nose seemed to have become too aquiline, too pointed and thin, for that of Ernestine; and then the lips—those cold, thin, purple lines—were compressed and rigid; but yet some beauty still was lingering there.

On the second day my Ernestine changed; her features became contracted and livid. Oh, my God! It was a mere yellow mask! I shuddered as I spread a veil over her, and could trust myself to gaze no longer.

I remembered that Gabrielle looked like a sleeping angel; but my Ernestine, more beautiful in life, was becoming ghastly and terrible in death.

"Oh, can this indeed be she who loved me so well!" was frequently my mental exclamation.

Oh, for one more glance—one respiration more! But the horrible stillness was unbroken; decay would come, but never again a glance or a smile.

I remembered now the charming delicacy, the fondness and

reverence, with which she had arranged poor Gabrielle's remains for the grave, and would permit no other hands than hers to touch them. *Now*, she herself, whose sentiment had been so fine, so delicate, so noble, was but a poor corpse too; but there was no sisterly hand to smooth *her* tresses, and arrange the ghostly garments of her long repose. She was left completely to strangers and hard-hearted followers of the camp.

I feared I should become mad, and so forget all about the plague and the siege; but I never left her side until the second day, when a tremendous salvo from the camarade battery made my heart leap within me; and then I heard the rattling drum and the yelling bagpipe summoning our soldiers to the walls. A new thought seized me!

I kissed her soft cheek, and that cold lip, whose icy touch sent a thrill of horror and agony to my heart; then, grasping my claymore, I threw myself at the head of my company, and rushed to the last defence of the Frankendör, with a deep and settled resolution to fall—to die!

CHAPTER XC.

LAST ASSAULT OF STRALSUND.

I FOUND that a salvo had completely breached the curtain of the bastion at the Frankendör; that the *débris* of fallen masonry, wooden platforms, cannon and their carriages, had half filled up the ditch before the gap; and that a strong column of Imperialists were advancing to a general assault, led by several officers on horseback, one of whom wore that large red plume for which the Count of Carlstein was so remarkable. Another, who was generally by his side, rode a magnificent white horse, and wore a cuirass and helmet which glittered like silver in the sun, being of the most beautiful workmanship; while his scarf, gloves, holsters, and housings were fringed with the richest bullion.

This cavalier was the great Duke of Friedland himself, and the place where he rode, at the head of that advancing column, was the mark of nearly a thousand muskets; for the Lord Spynie's regiment of Lowland Scots was now brigaded with ours, but both were greatly reduced in number; and a line of hollow-eyed and pale-visaged men they were, yet as desperate as the most resolute valour, goaded by starvation and disease, could make them.

Three strong regiments advanced to the attack:—one was the battalion of Camargo; another was the Spanish *Arcabuziers* of Coloredo; and in front was the regiment of Merodé, led by six soldiers, bearing on their shoulders a black coffin!

Within that coffin was Merodé, whom De Vert had slain by a mortal wound, but whose dying injunctions were that, dead or

living, he should head the assault of Stralsund. Ruffians though they were, his soldiers had a wild species of love for him; and now, sword in hand and shoulder-high, six of them bore his coffin towards the breach, the fire from whence, by frequently killing the bearers, threw the dead man heavily on the earth.

"Gentlemen and comrades," said Sir Donald, "pikemen and musketeers—to your duty, and do it according to your wont. Remember how many generations of our ancestors, all brave men, who loved the battle as a pastime, are this day looking down upon you from the place of the good man's reward in heaven."

"Dirk and claymore! dirk and claymore!" cried our men, and the shout was heard above the roar of the musketry.

"Yes!" said Ian, emphatically, as he shook his lofty plumes, "in Heaven's name, let it be dirk and claymore! I would rather meet those fellows hand to hand, in the good old Highland fashion, than by bandying bullets from behind a stone dyke. Let us this day save Stralsund, or perish with her!"

"Better it is to die by musket-shot than by starvation or the plague," grumbled Phadrig Mhor.

"Ian," said I, "you have still something to live for. Remember Moins!"

"True," said he; "Moins is here—in my eyes and in my heart. My life is hers."

"Then why throw it heedlessly away? Do you live for her. 'Tis enough for the wretched to perish."

He wrung my hand, and we passed to our places.

On this day of carnage and desperation the world was looking as bright as ever. The walls of the old city were smiling in the sunshine, and its ruddiest glow fell on the ancient church, within the walls of which there was the greatest amount of suffering. Though the season was advanced, the noon was somewhat sultry, and swarms of new-born gnats were wheeling in the sunny air. The young green grass was sprouting above the trenches where the dead were buried; the Sound was like a blue mirror, and clouds of fleecy whiteness flecked the wide azure dome of the sky. All nature looked beautiful, and the glad earth seemed to smile back on the bright sun; but man, in his wickedness, was doing all he could to render that beautiful earth—a Hell!

I had just come from the lifeless Ernestine, and hence, perhaps, this moralizing for a moment; but I was dogged and desperate; selfishly caring not who fell, or who survived—who might be victorious, or who vanquished. The world and I had no longer anything in common; and now the uproar and strife that deepened round me as the foe drew near were a congenial relief to my tortured spirit; for it rose, as it was drawn away from bitter thoughts, and my heart leaped at the rattling musketry, the shrieks, cries, and moans of the wounded, the tumultuous

shouts of the combatants as they closed up shoulder to shoulder in the breach, where our Highlanders shot, with rapid and deadly precision, right over the heads of a stand of Spynie's Lowland pikes, whose gallant breasts had replaced the fallen bastion.

On came that triple column of the foe, and now one high discordant yell announced that they were within pistol-shot; but so thick was the smoke before us that we could scarcely see them. The wild Merodeurs made incredible efforts to bring on the coffin of their colonel, and seemed to enjoy the strange bravado of being led by a corpse to the assault; but every relay of soldiers who lifted it from the earth was shot down in succession, until at last the coffin, with its bearers and hundreds of others, tumbled pell-mell into the ditch before the breach, the way to which became literally choked by the bodies of the killed and wounded; and over these the rear companies of the Merodeurs, and Carmargo's Spanish pikemen, rushed mingling to the assault, like a flood of valour and fury.

But the flood was stemmed, and that fury curbed, by the hedge of Scottish pikes that met them in the breach; and the Spaniards and Germans were rolled back on each other, until the front ranks were literally hurled headlong on the rear. In vain, by clubbed muskets, by hewing with swords, and by grasping with the bare hand, they strove to beat, to cut, or tear a passage through the soldiers of Lord Spynie. The finest chivalry of England, of Normandy, and Aquitaine had failed, on fields of more than European renown, to force a passage through a rampart of Scottish pikes; and now, assuredly, that honour was not reserved for the Imperialists of the Duke of Friedland. Some, however, were torn out of Spynie's ranks, and slain or taken prisoners; among the former was the son of the Laird of Leys, first private gentleman of a company; and, among the latter, Sir John Hume of Aytoune, in the Merse. He was dragged by the throat and waist-belt into the midst of the enemy, by whom he was barbarously slashed and wounded.

Over the heads of Spynie's men, and closing up into their ranks, our Highland musketeers poured their bullets point-blank into the faces of the stormers; while our brass cannon, from an angle of the bastion, raked their column in flank. Here they slew many of our best men; and Lumsden, my lieutenant, Captain M'Donald, of the house of Keppoch, and nearly three hundred gallant clansmen, fell to rise no more. We shot down all the mounted officers, save those two who had been so conspicuous, one by his red plume, the other by his snow-white horse; and, during the lulls of the smoke and uproar, they were to be seen and heard encouraging their soldiers, by precept and example, to push on, and to die rather than flinch.

"That is Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume!" I heard Sir Donald

say; "and he on the white horse is the Duke of Friedland; for who but he would have the black buffalo's head of Mecklenburg on his saddle-cloth? Fifty Scottish pounds to the man who knocks them both on the head!"

But they seemed to bear charmed lives, and though innumerable shots were fired at them through openings in the smoke, they were never hit; and now, fortunately for us, at the very moment our ammunition was beginning to fail, the enemy began to waver; and at such a time, and on such a duty, to waver is but a prelude to flight. They gave way on all hands, and retired with precipitation round the right flank of the Frankenlake, leaving behind them a terrible scene of carnage and destruction.

The killed lay in hundreds, and the wounded—screaming for water, groaning, rolling, and throwing up their hands and feet—lay in hundreds more, among scattered arms, drums, standards; and then the horrors of the fosse, where a seething mass of living and dead lay piled over each other, head and heels, endwise and crosswise, trod upon, and pierced in a thousand places by the storm of shot that had augmented their number every moment, piling up a hecatomb of slain above the abandoned coffin of the once terrible and reckless Merodé! Among their fallen riders, even in the ditch, as well as on the approach thereto, lay many noble horses, maddened by pain, kicking, plunging, snorting, and shrieking (for a horse, at times, can utter a frightful cry), as they rolled over the helpless wounded, with their iron hoofs breaking legs and ribs, or beating out the brains of those whom the musket-shot had already maimed elsewhere. Use and wont made us regardless of this scene; and now we were sufficiently attracted by another.

While the fugitives were retiring round the angle of the Frankenlake, the two mounted officers already mentioned were frequently seen endeavouring to rally them, and placing their horses before the flying bands; but they might as well have striven to stay the waves of the ocean. At last they appeared to quarrel with each other; we saw their swords gleam as blows were given and thrusts exchanged; their horses reared up, and then plunged past each other; a blade flashed in the sun, and the cavalier on the white horse was struck from his saddle; his charger galloped away, and while he had to limp after his soldiers on foot, the officer with the red plume came galloping madly back towards the breach, waving a white handkerchief to us in sign of truce or peace. Several shots were fired after him by the Merodeurs, but, escaping them, he cleared the corpse-encumbered ditch by one terrific bound, and forcing his noble horse up the rough avalanche of masonry, dismounted in the midst of us, breathless, panting, pale with excitement, anger, and exertion.

"The Count of Carlstein! Rupert-with-the-Red-Plume!" cried a hundred voices, in every varying accent of astonishment.

"Ay, gentlemen, your countryman! no longer, I fear, Rupert Count of Carlstein, but simply old Philip Rollo, the soldier of fortune that fate saw him thirty years ago. By one blow of my sword—the same which, not a minute ago, unhorsed that mighty, ambitious, and intolerable tyrant, the Duke of Friedland—I have demolished one of the fairest fortunes that ever a staunch soldier secured by the toil and dangers of a life that can never be lived again. Receive me, I pray you, as your countryman, as a poor and penniless soldier, who comes to seek service under the Swede and Dane."

The count spoke with bitterness, and breathed hard as he leaned on his sword, and our regiment closed round him with surprise and inquiry. Unwilling to tell what I knew would be as poniards in his heart (the fate of Ernestine), I stood a little in the background; while Marshal Leslie, Sir Donald Mackay, and Lord Spynie, all together inquired the cause of quarrel with his general. After taking a sip or two of brandy from the flask of Ian Dhu, and retiring a little apart from the vicinity of the breach—

"You are well aware, gentlemen," said he, "how signal has been the success attending the arms of the Emperor and princes of the Catholic League. Driven from Juteland, Christian IV. has been glad to seek shelter by sea and by wandering among the Danish isles, and the career of conquest has only been stopped by the waters of the Baltic——"

"And the Scottish infantry," interposed old Leslie.

"Yes, marshal, but that I considered as understood. I have long foreseen that this ambition will destroy itself. The combination of the northern kings is what Wallenstein most dreads and hates, as it prevents him obtaining a solid hold upon the Baltic, and from penetrating into Sweden for his own ends, though in the Emperor's name. At a great council of war held lately in Vienna, I threw out some hints of Wallenstein's hopes of founding a separate power in northern Europe—a power of which himself would be the head. I represented to the Emperor the necessity of making peace with Christian IV. before he invaded Sweden, urging that he could never withstand a union of the northern princes with the hostile Protestants of the empire. The Emperor was pleased to hearken to me, and, desirous of peace, despatched me to Stralsund here, with written powers to treat with Christian; these powers he afterwards dared to repudiate, and Wallenstein, who—far from wishing a peace, which would reduce him to a mere civilian again—hopes, in the general confusion, to achieve such ends as no man hath conceived since the days of Alexander of Macedon, dared to destroy

credentials before my face; yea, but yesterday in council! Hence our high words to-day, under the very muzzles of your cannon. When, enraged by the useless slaughter of which he was the cause, I accused him of daring and criminal ambition, blows were exchanged, and by one I hurled him to the earth, and cut myself off from the empire for ever."

How truly the count had judged of the character of the great Duke of Friedland (or the Archduke of Mecklenburg, as he was generally styled for a time), after events have shown; for they brought to pass that dark scene in the Bohemian Castle of Egar, where the Scottish colonels, Leslie and Gordon, were compelled to hew off his head in the banqueting hall.

"Ah! here is my friend and namesake, Captain Rollo," said the count, approaching me; "and so, comrade, you have still preserved the gold chain I gave you on that moonlight night by the marshy Elbe. But what is the matter? you look pale as Banquo's ghost. I see starvation in every eye here. Now lead me to my poor girl—the last that fate has left me; for if I have her in my arms, the county of Carlsstein, the castles of Giezar and Koeniggratz, with all my orders of knighthood and nobility, and my colonel-generalship of the Imperial Cavalry, may go to the devil, for aught that I care. Ha!—what is this?"

He paused, for there was, I knew, a terrible expression in my face; and, unable longer to conceal my emotion, I flung away my sword, muffled my face in my plaid, and burst into tears.

CHAPTER XCI.

THE SUN SHINES AGAIN.

WE entered the room where she lay, and the stillness of death was there. We approached her with reverence; and when I stretched my hand towards the veil that covered her, it was with the air of a monk displaying the sacrament; for the remains of those we love are to us the holiest of all holy things.

"Ernestine—oh, my Ernestine!" sobbed the count. I thought that the veil which shrouded her figure moved.

It was but fancy.

We stood silent, for our hearts swelled with the most intense sadness, and were filled by the memory of the past.

Language cannot portray what the count felt, for the shock was so sudden. Within one hour his pale cheek had sunk; his eyes were inflamed, and his voice trembled. The very profundity of the poor father's affliction had dried up the ordinary channels of grief, and thus no tear escaped to relieve his agony.

The face of Ernestine had still its unpleasant expression, and

yet, amid its awful stillness, I could have sworn a spasm contracted it.

The coffin was preparing; two of Spynie's soldiers were making it.

For a time the count was like a statue—frozen, impassible. I have said his grief was of that kind which had neither tears nor words. It escaped in deep, dry, agonizing sobs, and he clenched his nether lip with his teeth till the blood came.

"Blessed God! Thou triest me sorely! Both are gone!—both gone now!—and I am alone in this wide, dreary world again. At my age, 'tis said we cannot weep."

In brief terms, I informed the count of the relationship between us, and how Ernestine and I had discovered at Nyekiöbbing that he was my long-lost uncle Philip, and she my cousin. He gazed at me as if he thought I raved; then he seemed to be convinced, and then dismissed it from his mind; for surprise, regard, and all minor emotions had shrunk before the tornado of great and overwhelming grief.

"How long has she been dead?" he asked, in a low and husky voice.

"Since yesterday at noon—yesterday morning she was alive, and spoke to me."

The tears now burst from the eyes of the old soldier, and, stooping over the body, he embraced and kissed it.

Suddenly he uttered a cry, and turned to me with wildness and astonishment in his eyes.

"She is warm—she lives! Ernestine! Ernestine!"

I sprang to his side, and clasped one of her hands in mine. *It was quite warm!*

There was a convulsive motion in her fingers and feet; she opened her eyes, and a faint sigh escaped her; joy and terror bewildered me for a moment. Then I rushed away in search of a surgeon. Hurrying through the streets bareheaded, and without sword, scarf, or doublet, the first I met was no other than old Pennicuik. He thought me seized by delirium; but accompanied me without delay to the room of Ernestine, who seemed to be again hovering between life and death.

How dimly and confusedly that new day of terror, grief, and joy floats before me! I was like one who suffered from vertigo; I do not think I had the full use of my senses. Pennicuik immediately ordered all the windows to be opened; he took the pillows from under her head; he bathed her temples with Hungary water, *eau de luce*, and warm brandy; he sponged her little hands and snow-white arms in vinegar and warm water; and a little wine was gently poured between her lips. Then, after the fashion of the female nurses at the Altenburg hospital, he blew air into her lungs by the nostrils.

In two days she was so fully restored to life as to be able to relate to us all her sensations, some of which were very remarkable.

She had *dreamed* that she was dead, and yet was sensible of all that passed around her. At times it seemed as if her spirit left her body, and yet remained near it—appearing to hover over that which it had no longer the power to move. When I kissed her, and closed her eyes, she had felt the touch of my hand without having the power of opening her eyes again. The horror of being buried alive occasioned her the utmost agony; and when she heard persons moving about her—when she heard sounds in the street, especially the jangle of the death-cart bell, her *unexpressed* agitation was terrible; but her soul could no longer act upon her fettered tongue, and she felt icy cold. Hence those spasmodic contractions of feature which I had actually seen, but thought were the result of my own disturbed fancy. The approach of her father, and the sound of his voice, gave a new impulse to her almost prostrate mind; it resumed its wonted power over her weakened organization, and produced the sudden warmth which had startled him, when he thought he was embracing her for the last time.

Language has no power to describe the joy of such a restoration, as it seemed, from the very jaws of the grave; but it formed the subject of two sermons—one preached by Father Ignatius, and the other by the Reverend Gideon Geddes, who construed the affair very differently; for the Jesuit affirmed that she had been restored to life by virtue of certain blessed relics which he had cunningly slipped below her pillow, while the Presbyterian declared that she had merely been restored to existence that she might live to see the errors of Popery and its ways; and if the reader partake my joy and satisfaction, he or she will pardon my having kept them behind the curtain for a single chapter.

Little more remains to be told.

Rendered desperate by the successive defeats he had sustained since the battle of Lütter, Christian IV. was compelled, at the conference at Lubeck, in 1629, to accede to the terms of a treaty of peace offered by the great Duke of Friedland, who then restored to Denmark all that he and Tilly had taken beyond the Elbe; and the siege of Glückstadt, which had been so valiantly defended by the Scottish cavaliers of Sir David Drummond, was raised. The conditions imposed upon Christian were, that he should no more interfere in the German affairs than he was entitled to do as Count of Holstein; that on no pretext was he to enter the circles of Lower Germany; that he was to leave the weak and timid family of the palatine to its fate; and that the Scottish troops in his service were to quit it forthwith.

Thus, by a strange combination of misfortunes, was the most ant of the Danish monarchs compelled to retire ingloriously from the great arena of the German war.

After thanking us for our services, he bade us adieu, and I saw the tears glisten in the only eye that war had left him. He sailed—not to rejoin his queen, who always met him with coldness in his reverses—but to seek the society and solace of the fair Countess of Fehmarn, his wife of the left-hand; who, whether in victory or defeat, had ever welcomed him with joy, gratitude, and love.

Repulsed, as related, in his last attempt to obtain Stralsund by assault, the great and ambitious Duke Albrecht, after a four months' siege, in which he lost upwards of twelve thousand of his best and bravest soldiers, was compelled to spike his cannon, burn his camp, destroy his baggage, and retreat into Saxony, thus acknowledging that neither his skill nor his mighty host had availed him before the valour of Marshal Leslie's Scottish garrison.

The plague passed away with him, and health, happiness (and fresh provisions), all flowed together into Stralsund. The good and industrious citizens resumed their wonted occupations; and, so sensible were they of the protection our swords had afforded, that they made old Field-marshal Leslie a magnificent present of silver-plate, and ordered medals* to be struck in honour of the Scottish troops.

It was arranged that the Highland regiment of Strathnaver, then reduced to about four hundred men, should enter the Swedish service with Sir Alexander Leslie, and that all the Scottish and French volunteers who served King Christian should accompany them; but as Ian Dhu and I had seen enough of the German wars to enable us to acquit ourselves in Scottish society at home; and, moreover, as a cloud was darkening in the political horizon of the North, we took a sad farewell of the brave fellows we had ed in so many arduous encounters, and prepared to return to our native glens. The count prepared to accompany us.

"I am now sick of war," said he; "and, as King Jamie said of old, have a salmon-like instinct to revisit the place of my nativity."

Aware that reverses of fortune might one day come upon him, and that his estates of Carlstein, Giezar, and Koeniggratz in Bohemia were perhaps little better than so many castles in the air, the count, like a wary old soldier, had gradually secured vast sums in the hands of those famous and wealthy merchants, Thomas Watson of Leith, and Herr Dübbelstein of Glückstadt. Thus he was as independent of the family of Craigrollo as I; for on my marriage with Ernestine (which we had arranged should take place in the old kirk of St. Regulus at home) I would receive a handsome share of the count's prize-money, which would

* Some of these are still (I believe) in possession of the Leven family.

form a very reputable estate, the more so if we could secure the two baronies of poor Kœningheim ; but I feared *that* would be no easy matter, as various real and imaginary relations had already possessed themselves of all his towers and places of strength.

However, we fully hoped to be able to give direct contradiction to the old prophecy anent the family heirloom, and the absurd assertion that never a Rollo throve in this world if his mouth was unable to receive its mighty disc.

I shall never forget the day on which we marched from Stralsund ; for we all embarked together. My dear comrades, to enter on the long and glorious career of the new German war ; Ernestine, the Count, Ian, and myself, with Phadrig Mhor, to return to old Scotland ; for Ian was to be married to his Moira, and Phadrig remembered that there was a lint-locked lassie in Strathdee, who would be very well pleased if again he came back to her and the green forests of Braemar.

Ernestine had fully recovered, and had become more beautiful and radiant than ever.

She wept when honest Father Ignatius lifted up his long bony-hands and blessed her, before departing, staff in hand, as he said, "like St. Argobastus the Scot," on his lonely pilgrimage after the Imperial host.

The Swedish fleet lay at anchor in the Sound to receive the regiment, which my heart bled to leave.

The good ship *Scottish Crown*, with all her sails loose, and a spring upon her cable, waited to receive us.

On one side lay the deserted trenches and dismantled batteries of the discomfited Wallenstein ; here lay a brass cannon with the moss upon its muzzle ; there a mound where the fresh grass sprouted above the calm repose of the dead, and the autumn flowers expanded in the morning sunshine.

On the other side rose busy Stralsund, its shining walls decorated by silken banners, and its church-bells tolling merrily ; for now war, disease, and desolation had passed away together.

Between, lay the blue waters of the narrow Sound, where the white sails of the Scottish and Swedish ships were flapping in the morning wind.

By the round archway, by the stony streets, and the frowning bastions, our hoarse drums beat merrily, and the shrill fife, with the proud war-pipe of the Gaël, rang upon the breeze ; the green tartan waved, and the silken banners with the Red Lion and the Silver Cross rustled above our heads. All our hearts beat high with hope and ardour ; and yet it was not without a sigh of regret for the brave Scottish hearts that had grown cold for ever beneath Jaromar's walls, that we marched down to the crowded and sunny beach for embarkation.

NOTES.

I.—THE SCOTS IN DENMARK.

SOME account of the Scottish troops who went to Denmark about 1695, will be found in the *Memoirs of Sir John Hepburn*, recently published by the author of this work. They appear to have mustered as follows:—

| | Men. |
|---|------|
| The regiment of Sir Donald Mackay of Farr | 1500 |
| Colonel Sir James Leslie's regiment | 1000 |
| Alexander Seaton's | 800 |
| The regiment of the Earl of Nithsdale, three Batts | 3000 |
| The regiment of Alexander Lord Spynie, ditto | 3000 |
| The regiment of Sir James Sinclair of Murkle, ditto | 3000 |

These 12,000 men were independent of 3000 sent by Scotland to the Isle Rhé, and about 13,000 more who entered the service of Gustavus Adolphus, while at the same time many of the Scottish Catholics flocked to the standard of the Emperor Ferdinand II.

II.—THE SCOTTISH FLAG.

"The regiment received colors," says Colonel Munro, "whereon His Majesty (Christian IV.) would have the officers to carry the Danes Crosse, which the officers refusing, they were summoned to compeare before his Majesty at Raynesberge, to know the reason of their refusall—and for the eschewing of greater inconvenience, the officers desired so much time of his Majesty, as to send Captaine Robert Ennis into England, to know his Majesty of Great Britaine's will, whether or no they might carrie without reproach the Danish crosse in *Scottish Colors*." Answer was returned, that they should obey the orders of him they served.—See MUNRO'S *Expedition with Mackay's Regiment*. Published 1637.

III.—THE HIGHLAND PURSE.

Macnab of Macnab presented to the Scottish antiquaries, in 1783, a Highland-purse clasp, exactly similar to that described as being worn by Philip Rollo. This suggested to Scott a similar clasp for guarding the sporran of Rob Roy, who said to Bailie Jarvie, "I would advise no man to attempt opening this sporran till he has my secret."

The story of the Lily of Culbleine is an ancient Scottish tradition; her grave is still shown in her native parish; and many of the characters mentioned in the foregoing pages were all persons who really existed at the time. I may particularly instance Dr. Pennicuik of Newhall and that Ilk, an account of whom will be found in the *Scots Magazine* for 1805. Other names, such as Sir Alexander Leslie's, belong to the history of Scotland, and require no comment. Bandolo is also a real character; and his double assassinations at Naples are veritable history.

IV.—THE ROLLO SPOON.

The idea of this quaint heirloom is taken from a similar one preserved by the ancient family of Crauford of Cowdenhill. It is of silver, measuring three inches wide in the mouth, and inscribed—

"This spoon I leave in legacie,
To the maist mouthed Crauford after me,
1480."

V.—MACKAY'S OFFICERS.

Some idea of the service seen by the regiment of Strathnaver may be gathered from the following list of its officers, who were wounded or lost their lives in the service of Christian IV. of Denmark, between August, 1626, and August, 1629. It is made up from Munro and others:—

Colonel Sir Donald Mackay, Bart., scorched by powder at the defence of Oldenburg.

Lieutenant-Colonels Seaton and Arthur Forbes, wounded at Oldenburg.

Major Dunbar, slain defending Boitzenburg.

Captain Boswal, slain by the boors in Bremen.

" John Learmouth of Balcomie, wounded twice by musket-balls at Boitzenburg, and died in consequence at Hamburg.

" Sir Patrick McGie received a wound at Oldenburg, of which he died at Copenhagen.

" John Forbes of Tulloch, wounded at Oldenburg.

" Robert Munro, wounded in the knee at Oldenburg.

" Duncan Forbes, killed at Bredenburg.

" ——— Carmichael, killed at Bredenburg.

" Thomas Mackenzie of Kildon (Lord Seaforth's brother), wounded in the legs at Eckernföörd.

" ——— Armis, wounded at the siege of Stralsund.

" Andrew Munro, also wounded there; and afterwards slain in single combat by the Count of Rantzau, in the Isle of Fehmarn.

Captain Lieutenant Kerr, wounded in an arm at Eckernföörd.

Lieutenant David Martin, killed at Boitzenburg.

" Hugh Ross, lost a leg by a cannon-shot at Oldenburg.

" Andrew Stewart (brother of John, first Earl of Traquair), received a wound at Oldenburg, and died of it at Copenhagen.

" ——— Barbour, killed at Bredenburg.

" David Munro, scorched by powder when blowing up the church at Eckernföörd.

" ——— Beaton, wounded at Stralsund.

" Arthur Arbuthnot, also wounded there.

Ensign Innes, wounded at Oldenburg, and slain at Stralsund.

" Seaton, wounded at Oldenburg, and slain at Stralsund.

" Stewart, wounded at Oldenburg.

" Gordon, wounded at Oldenburg.

" David Munro, wounded at Oldenburg.

" Patrick Dunbar, wounded at Stralsund.

Quartermaster Bruntisfield, wounded at Stralsund, where 500 of the Highlanders were killed.

Chaplain, killed at Bredenburg.

The regiment had more than 30 officers killed and wounded in three years, and lost more than 1000 privates in the same short space of time.

THE END.

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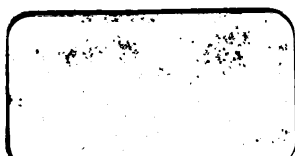
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